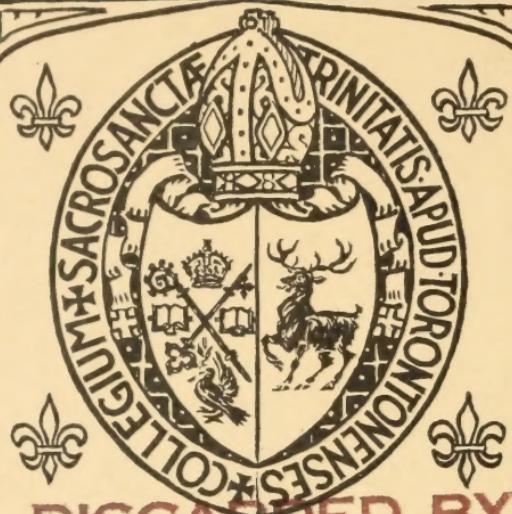


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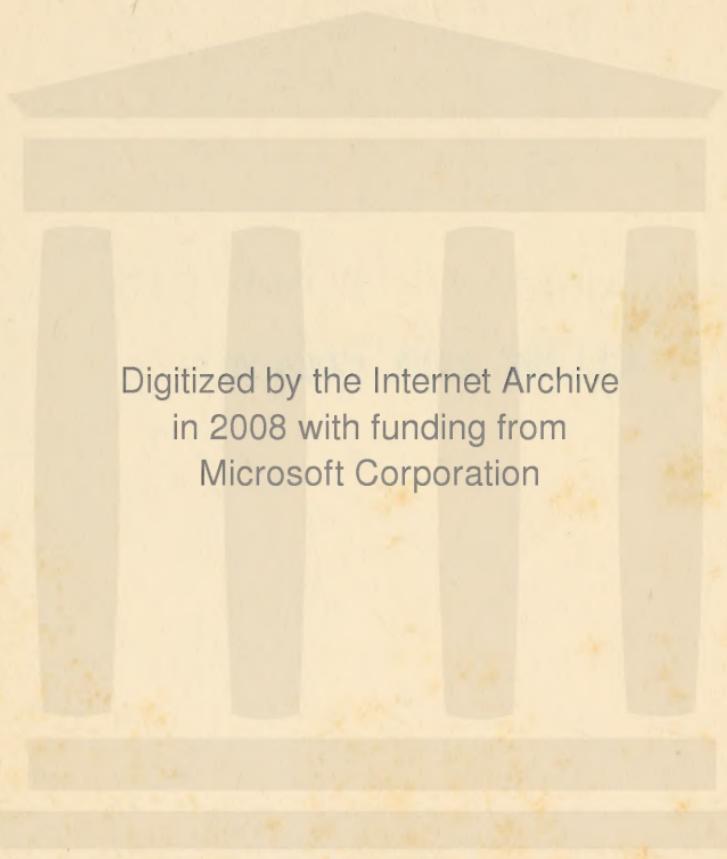
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CLUBS AND CLUBMEN



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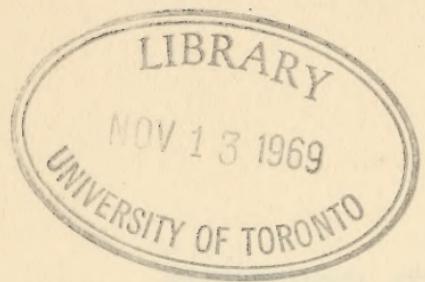
By

MAJOR ARTHUR GRIFFITHS

Author of "The Rome Express," etc.

London: HUTCHINSON & CO.
Paternoster Row * * * 1907

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CLUBS AND CLUBMEN

CHAPTER I

CLUBS IN GENERAL

THEIR VARIETY AND VIGOROUS VITALITY—CLUB LIFE GENERALLY—
EARLY CLUBS : POLITICAL, SOCIAL, CONVIVIAL—THE MOHOCKS—
THE KIT CAT—THE ROYAL SOCIETY—THE BEEFSTEAK.

OF the making of clubs there is no end. Every class, every category, every phase of thought, every taste and habit, every profession, almost every trade has its representative gathering-place ; the softer sex will not be denied the joys and benefits that are afforded by the congregate existence, which is one of the chief *raisons d'être* of the club, and they have established their own houses, ever increasing in number, and growing steadily in popularity. Clubs may be taken as recording and epitomising the social movements and progress as the centuries pass. Some of the earliest were formed for purposes that still hold good in these latter days. Many were meant for pleasant converse and the enjoyment of good cheer ; there is still good talk and a plentiful flow of wit in some club

smoking-rooms. The club table is furnished forth with baked meats, the club cellar still gratifies the palate, though eating and drinking are seldom carried to the excess that discredited past generations. Political clubs are as old as the invention of “party” and they still flourish, although opinions in our days are not so strongly held as of yore, and membership is not strictly limited to political creed. A man sometimes will change his coat sooner than his club, even at the dictation of a committee aiming at orthodoxy. We hear of purists perambulating the Reform in search of a true radical, and statesmen, members of conservative cabinets, are still found in Brooks’s, that ancient stronghold of Liberalism.

Differences are most strongly marked in the purely social clubs. A few stand pre-eminent, of assured rank and universally accepted high tone. After them comes a long tail of quite respectable but still mediocre and unpretending establishments. It is counted a great honour to belong to the Marlborough, because election to it was long impossible without the imprimatur of its august founder. The Royal Yacht Club stands on an even higher pedestal, because the King’s backing would hardly impose an unwelcome candidate upon the club. The same may be said of the Jockey Club, entrance to which is a passport to the highest place and an unquestionable guarantee of “good form.” There are many others

jealously guarded by the eclecticism of the ballot-box ; a man must be hall-marked, well vouched for and well backed up to pass the portals of the Travellers', Brooks's, Boodle's, White's, the Turf, the Garrick, the Portland, St. James's, the Beefsteak, the Windham, and a few more. Distinction in any field is the only sure warranty for membership of the Athenæum. The peculiar merits applied to the expression "clubable," the fair assumption that he will be a *persona grata* to his fellows, are indispensable to the candidate for the Garrick. The same qualifications are needed at the Arts and Savile, with an added flavour of fondness for literary, scientific, or artistic pursuits. The Service Clubs maintain their character more or less unchanged, although cliqueism is not unknown in them ; so do the learned, if the University clubs may be so called. A great increase in the theatrical profession has led to the foundation of clubs like the Green-room, the Playgoer, and the O.P. The sporting clubs vary somewhat, perhaps, in the games to which they are addicted, but good taste, to say nothing of the law, exercises a chastening effect on speculation ; and the days of the old gambling clubs, when fortunes were made and lost in a night, have disappeared entirely to the limbo of the "has beens."

There are cakes and ale still, even if we become virtuous ; Bohemian clubs still prosper and develop

in favour. Some remain true to the conditions under which they were created, and are still ragged but jovial, as unspoiled as the potatoes in their jackets that flank the smoking chops and foaming flagons, the buck rarebits, the cold pork and port wine that are their favourite viands. Others have taken to dress suits and the entertainment of persons of the nicest consideration. One can never forget one old haunt of roystering character, nor the story of the demure country parson, who, arriving by a night train, appeared seeking breakfast and was told by a sleepy waiter that no suppers were served after 6 a.m. It is of the same club that another story is told of a member who dropped a £5 note on the floor in the writing-room and, hurrying back when he discovered his loss, found a waiter had picked it up and restored it. "Lucky one of the members did not see it," he remarked sententiously. The emancipation of another club, which shall be nameless, from the thraldom of a clique that threatened to ruin it, is a story worth recording. By an assumption of authority perfectly illegal, one half assembled in a general meeting and decreed to expel the other half, which was presently done, and the remnant carried it on afterwards very creditably. The chief risk run by these "outside" shows, is that of degeneracy into devious ways, the intrusion and supremacy of evil elements and the possible interference of the police.

Public attention has been much attracted of late to clubs and some discussion aroused concerning club life. We are told that London clubs are approaching the grand climacteric, that disease and decay are showing themselves, and that these time-honoured institutions, hitherto so full of vigorous growth, are verging upon decline. It would not be difficult to prove that the verdict has been given somewhat hastily and from too limited knowledge and observation. Candidates' waiting lists may be diminishing in some clubs, but hardly in those long established, and where it is the case it is for reasons other than those adduced ; such as the competition of the modern restaurant, the tendency to high play, the lack of sociability and too much exclusiveness among members, the general absence of the feminine element, the increase in club tariffs, charges all of which might be largely challenged and refuted. But the club still fills a large space in London society and will no doubt continue to do so in the face of all attack or the alleged dry-rot. They are still bound up with the daily needs of a great number who seek in them something more than the gratification of appetite, the card table, the gossip of the smoking-room. Privacy, peace and quiet, friendly converse, and the intelligent exchange of ideas may still be had in good clubs with an assured position, if not in those of mushroom growth and still on their promotion ; and it is these last that presumably

have evoked most adverse criticism. As a matter of fact the best clubs still flourish on a firm basis ; if, in some, fewer candidates seek election, it is because more opportunities offer for admission elsewhere ; more clubs, in fact, exist to compete for members. Really good, high-class clubs still thrive, few suffer appreciably from the supposed change in social habits ; never, or quite rarely, has any club of fair fame closed its doors in recent years. But, instead of speculating further as to the future of London clubs, it may be more interesting to consider what they have been, how they have increased and multiplied, and what they actually are in these latter days.

The present conditions in clubland and the chief features presented by the more prominent clubs of to-day may well be preceded by a brief, but more or less complete, survey of clubs in general. Probably the first club formed in London was that established in the Mermaid Tavern, Bread Street, E.C. (or Friday Street, according to other accounts),¹ at the end of the sixteenth or beginning of the seventeenth century, and the word “club” (spelt “clubbe”) seems to have appeared first about that time. This Mermaid Tavern is supposed to

¹ The title and position are fixed by Ben Jonson’s lines :

At Bread Street’s Mermaid having dined and merry,
Proposed to go to Holborn in a wherry.

BEN JONSON, ed. Gifford, viii. 242.

have been instituted by Sir Walter Raleigh, and was frequented by the choice spirits of the age ; Shakespeare himself, with Beaumont, Fletcher, Seldon, Cotton, and Ben Jonson. But there was another club which Ben Jonson greatly favoured, the Apollo, which met at the tavern of that name, with the sign of St. Dunstan pulling the devil's nose. A bust of Apollo stood over the door, and within the club-house was a black painted board bearing the word "Welcome." A peculiarity of the club was "that ladies of character were not excluded from the meetings." The house was between Temple Bar and Temple Gate, and at a later date became the temporary home of the Royal Society Club.

One of the earliest political clubs was established in 1659, the Rota, a kind of debating society, which met at the Turk's Head in New Palace Yard. It possessed a ballot box and balloted how things should be carried on. "The room was every evening as full as it could be crammed." The name was derived from a scheme proposed by the club that a certain number of Members of Parliament should retire annually by rotation. Among the members were John Milton, Marvell, and Harrington, and Aubrey calls them "disciples and virtuosi." The place was known for its dissensions and brawls. Mr. Pepys tells us that he visited it and heard a good discourse from Mr. Harrington. There was also the

Sealed Knot, an old Royalist club, which conspired in favour of King Charles, but was betrayed by one of its members in Cromwell's day, and the chief members of the club were arrested on the information of a spy among them, Sir Richard Willis, and thrown into gaol.

A great number of clubs flourished in the time of Queen Anne ; these are referred to in the *Spectator*, No. IX., where Harrison writes : " Man is said to be a sociable animal and we take all occasions and pretences of forming ourselves into these little nocturnal assemblies which are known by the name of clubs." The political clubs no longer plotted against the existing Government, but had Parliamentary discussions and confined themselves to comparing changes in administration. The October Club met at the Bell Tavern, King Street, Westminster, and was so called from the October ale that men drank in their fierce attempts to impeach the other party. Dean Swift was a great person at the " October," where he laboured to talk over those amenable to reason and appease discontent. He did not go far enough to please the red-hot " Tantivies," and the more thorough proceeded to form themselves into a March Club, more Jacobite and more bitter. Swift was a prominent personage in club life at this period and frequented a Saturday club, which was composed of supporters of the Government. He also framed the rules of the

Brothers' club which met every Thursday, when the members dined together at various taverns, such as the Thatched House, Ozinda's Coffee-house ("just by St. James's"), and the Star and Garter, in Pall Mall. At these convivial meetings, as Swift wrote to Stella, "There was much drinking, little thinking."

The Scriblerus Club was of a literary, rather than political, character. The Calves' Head was supposed to ridicule the memory of Charles I. Another club of the Restoration was the club of "Kings" or the King's Club, all the members of which were called "King." Charles II. was an honorary member. Then there was the King's Head Club, intended to support the Court and Government and increase the Protestant zeal, sometimes called the Green Ribbon Club from the badge worn by its members. There was a curious institution at the commencement of the eighteenth century called the Street Club, supported by the inhabitants of the street, so that a man need not stir far from his own door to enjoy the society of his neighbours. Nightly dangers from footpads and bad roads made men anxious not to go far abroad, and "Street Clubs" were planted all over the town.

The Mohocks were a notorious fraternity, who terrorised the town in the days of Queen Anne and committed all sorts of excesses in the public streets. They followed the lawless traditions of

the “Mums” and “Tityre-Tus” of the Restoration and were followed by the “Hectors” and “Scourers,” “The Nickers,” who shattered windows by throwing ha’pence at them, the “Hawkabites,” and notably the “Mohocks.” *Mr. Spectator* writing on March 12, 1712, speaks of an association of dissolute young men who went under the title of the Mohock Club, a name borrowed it seems “from a sort of cannibals in India, who subsist by plundering and devouring all the nations about them.” Addison’s ethnographic ignorance is pardonable; he may be excused for not knowing that the Mohawks were Red Indians, the allies of the Iroquois and, like them, a very bloodthirsty tribe. The Mohocks of London, however, were, in their way, almost as bad as their sponsors. We read that “the avowed design of their institution was to do mischief”; these roystering blades infested the dimly lighted streets, moved by “an outrageous ambition to do all possible hurt to their fellow creatures.” “Some are knocked down, others stabbed, others cut and carbonadoed. To put the watch to a total rout and mortify some of their most offensive members is reckoned a *coup d'état*. The particular talents by which these misanthropes are distinguished from one another consist in the various kinds of barbarities which they execute upon their prisoners. Some are celebrated for a happy dexterity in ‘tipping the lion’ on them, which

is performed by squeezing the nose flat to the face, and boring out their eyes with their fingers (no doubt the modern and pleasing practice of gouging) ; others are called the 'dancing masters' and teach their scholars by running swords through their legs. . . . In this way they carry on a war against mankind."

The excesses of these wild dare-devils kept the town in constant terror for a couple of years or more. They continued to slit people's noses, they wounded women with penknives or rolled them in tubs down Saffron Hill ; they invented a peculiar instrument, a sort of club loaded with lead, which could upset coaches and sedan chairs. Their constant foes were the watchmen, or "Charlies," and when any of these usually inefficient policemen dared to arrest one of their body, they went "with savage dogs" and stormed and broke open the round house. So serious were their depredations that a reward of £100 was offered for their discovery. Addison, in the *Spectator*, again returned to the charge, but varied his attack by publishing a supposed manifesto by the Emperor of the Mohocks, by name "Taw Wer Eben Zau Kaladar," to his followers, wherein they are made to appear rather a useful body, "regulators" as it were, whose business it was to inflict penalties on persons of loose and dissolute lives. "If any man," says the Emperor, "be knocked down or assaulted while

he is employed in his lawful business at proper hours, it is not done by our order, and we do hereby allow such person so knocked down or assaulted to rise again and defend himself in the best manner that he is able." He goes on to forbid the Mohocks to begin operations till between 11 and 12 p.m. They are "never to tip the lion on man, woman, or child, till the clock of St. Dunstan's shall have struck one."

When people were "pinned" it was to be in the most fleshy parts; when "sweated" care was to be taken that the patient did not take cold. The pretended object of these proceedings was the reformation of London; all husbands, fathers, housekeepers, and masters of families were earnestly entreated to go home at early and seasonable hours, and "also to keep their wives and daughters, sons, servants, and apprentices from appearing in the streets at those times and seasons which may expose them to a military discipline, as is practised by our good subjects, the Mohocks." The manifesto, which was given from "our court" at the Devil Tavern, ended with a promise to cease all hostilities "so soon as the reformation aforesaid shall have been brought about."

As time passed other clubs grew and flourished, some exhibiting the profaneness and profligacy of the period, such as the Hell Fire Club. There were many Mug House clubs, so called because

each member drank his ale, the only liquor used, out of a separate mug. The politics of the hour were discussed at these Mug House meetings, and were not without influence on passing events. There were many Mug House riots which ended in incendiarism and even murder ; these about 1722 brought down legislation on the Mug House clubs, which were forbidden by Act of Parliament.

The Kit Cat Club was a famous institution, formed about 1700, and was composed of thirty-nine noblemen and gentlemen zealously attached to the House of Hanover, among them six dukes and many other peers with many notable commoners. They met at a small house in Shire Lane by Temple Bar, where a famous mutton-pie man, by name Christopher Katt, supplied his pies to the club suppers and gave his name to the club, although it has been stated that the pie itself was called Kit Cat. The sponsor of the club has been otherwise stated as Christopher Cat, the pastry-cook of King Street, Westminster. In the now narrow alley of Shire Lane, otherwise Lower Serle Street, and in the now rather squalid premises, the finest gentlemen and choicest wits of the reigns of Queen Anne and George I. assembled, such worthies as Halifax, Somers, Addison, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Garth. The character of the club was literary and gallant as well as political. The members subscribed the sum of four hundred guineas to offer as prizes

for the best comedies written. A great feature of the club were the "toasting tumblers," each inscribed with a toast in verse praising some reigning beauty, chief among them the four splendid daughters of the house of Marlborough, Ladies Godolphin, Sunderland, Bridgewater, and Monthermer. Other belles were the Duchess of Bolton, Lady Wharton, Lady Carlisle, Mrs. Brudenell, and Mrs. Barton, the lovely niece of Sir Isaac Newton.

There were many merry meetings, where the members coming together laid bets and drank hard. On one occasion Sir Samuel Garth, physician to George I., was of the party, but protested that he must leave early as he had many patients to visit. But the charms of the bottle were too attractive, and he lingered on hour after hour. Sir Richard Steele, who was present, reminded him of his professional duties, when Garth produced his list of patients. There were fifteen of them. "It matters little," he cried, "whether I see them or not, to-night. Nine or ten are so bad that all the doctors in the world could not save them, and the remainder have such tough constitutions that no doctors are needed by them."

It was the rule of the club that members should have their portraits painted. Jacob Jonson, the famous bookseller, created the club and became its secretary. He made it a weekly gathering of litterateurs, whom he entertained with pies, making

it a condition that his guests should sell him their manuscripts. Jonson started the portraiture and had his own picture painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller, the rest following suit. Jonson built a picture gallery as an addition to his villa at Barn Elms. The room was not large enough to take in half-length canvases, and a special size of portrait was invented, 36 inches by 28 inches, and the club became the sponsor of the Kit-Kat canvas, the name which still survives. The gallery of pictures was inherited by Richard Jonson, the grandson of Jacob, who resided at Water Oakley on the Thames. After Richard Jonson they passed to Mr. Baker of Bayfordbury, and many of them may now be seen on the walls of the Ranelagh Club at Barnes.

The Tatlers Club also stood in Shire Lane, "or Roger Lane, which falleth into Fleet Street by Temple Bar." We have a full account of it in a number of the famous periodical, the *Tatler*, produced, edited, and largely written by Sir Richard Steele, under the well-known sobriquet, Isaac Bickerstaff. In the magazine the club was supposed to meet in the Trumpet Tavern in the same street, and was composed of smokers, story-tellers, and garrulous talkers. Steele is remembered as the sweetest tempered man in the world. Macaulay says of him : " His affections were warm, his spirits lively, his passions strong, and his principles weak." He was

always borrowing from his friends and seldom remembered to pay. Addison, his dearest friend outwardly, put an execution into Steele's house for money lent, and sold him up, but had the manners to remit him the surplus of price fetched over and above the amount of the debt. Steele was expelled the House of Commons for speaking too freely, but got in again as M.P. for Borobridge on the accession of George I., and was knighted. He was sometime patentee of Drury Lane Theatre, and produced at least one good play there, the "Conscious Lovers," an exquisite comedy. There is a modern Tatlers Club, a social gathering for gastronomic purposes, the members of which, mostly social and theatrical celebrities, dine together once a month at the Ritz, or some other aristocratic hostelry.

Another coterie of literary men assembled at a tavern in the early decades of the eighteenth century, in Dean's Court, to dine on fish and drink porter. One of these gatherings expanded into the "Club of Royal philosophers," or as it came to be called the Royal Society Club. The members dined together on Thursdays, usually to the number of six, but it is recorded in the club archives that the reputed ill-omened number of thirteen frequently made up the party. The club often dined at Pontack's, the celebrated French eating-house in Abchurch Lane, City. They met also at the Devil Tavern near Temple Bar, and at the Mitre Tavern

in Fleet Street. In 1780 the club went first to the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand, where they remained for sixty-eight years, but in 1848 removed to the Freemasons' Tavern in Fleet Street. When the Royal Society was installed at Burlington House, in 1857, the club held its meetings at the Thatched House in St. James' Street, which they frequented until the Tavern was pulled down.

The Royal Philosophers feasted as royally as their name justified. Here is a bill of fare for sixteen at a dinner shortly after the club started : "Turkey boiled, and oysters ; calves' head hashed ; chine of mutton ; apple pye ; two dishes of herrings ; tongue and udder ; leg of pork and pease ; sirloin of beef ; plum pudding ; butter and cheese." Black puddings were a standing dish at the club banquets. Presents of luscious food were often lavished on the club. The gift of a haunch of venison annually entitled the donor to the privilege of honorary membership and the same compliment followed the gift of a turtle. When Lord Anson returned from his circumnavigation of the world he presented the club with a magnificent turtle, for which he received the usual thanks. One turtle was given which weighed four hundred pounds, and when sent to table a larger dining-room was used. Mighty chines of beef were given to the club ; Lord Morton's present was of "two pigs of the China breed." In addition to venison and game, choice

fruits were offered, a water melon from Malaga, Egyptian cos lettuces, "the most valuable known," pine-apples, gooseberries of two sorts, apricots, and currants. After dining off venison, the members were entertained at a formal meeting of the society, by the sight of five electrical eels from Surinam, all alive, "and most of the company received the electrical stroke," after which they were shown a "sucking alligator, very lively."

The cost of the dinner gradually rose. It began at eighteen-pence per head, then to four shillings, including wine and twopence to the waiter, and latterly to ten shillings. The wine was laid in at £45 the pipe, or eighteen-pence per bottle, and charged by the landlord at half-a-crown. The club was sometime known as "Dr. Halley's," and, according to Admiral Smyth, Halley was its founder, described as an eminent philosopher, "at once proudly eminent as an astrologer, a mathematician, a naturalist, a scholar, an antiquary, a poet, a meteorologist, a physiologist, a geographer, navigator, a truly social member of the community—in a word the Admirable Crichton of Science."

Among the more curious members of the Club was the Honourable Henry Cavendish, commonly called the "Club Crœsus." Many odd stories were told of him, mostly apocryphal. A rich man, who seldom had enough money in his pockets to pay for his dinner, his ways at the club were not

satisfactory ; he was given to picking his teeth with a fork, carried his cane stuck in his right boot, and resented it when any one else hung his hat on the peg he preferred in the hall. He was said to have bequeathed a large legacy to another member, Lord Bessborough, in gratitude for his piquant conversation in the Club, but the story is not authenticated.

The President of the Royal Society was always elected President of the Club. It became a great gathering-place for celebrities. Princes, Ministers of State, noblemen of high rank, foreign ambassadors, found seats at its table among other guests, men of science, great ecclesiastics, distinguished soldiers and sailors, as a few names will testify : such as, Franklin, Jenner, John Hunter, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Gibbon, Wedgwood, Turner, De la Beche and Brunel. A remarkable dinner in 1859 included George Stephenson, Wheatstone, who invented the electric telegraph, and Rowland Hill, the originator of penny postage.

A well-known Club, the Beefsteak, has come to be symbolical of the national cuisine, and the name has fathered many famous clubs given to good cheer. The earliest probably was established in the first decade of the eighteenth century and is mentioned in the *Spectator* of March 10, 1710-11, where it is recorded that : "The Beefsteak and the October Club¹ are neither of them

¹ See ante, p. 8.

averse to eating and drinking, if we may form a judgement of them from their respective titles." Ned Ward in his "Secret History of Clubs, 1709," contrasts the Beefsteak Club with the more refined Kit-Kat Club, already in existence, which he rather despises. In choosing the Ruinp Steak in preference to the Mutton Pie they showed "a more masculine grace," and "the title sounded better for a true English club." Epicurean members varied the beef-steak cookery, which "some eat boiled, some fryed, some stewed, some toasted, others roasted, and some with the flavour of a shalot or onion."

Two different origins have been given to the club—one, that Rich, when he became the lessee of Covent Garden Theatre, was in the habit of arranging his comic business and constructing the models for his pantomimes in his private room. People of fashion flocked there, for Rich was an agreeable companion, whose society was much sought by men of wit and rank. The versatile Lord Peterborough, the friend of Pope, and the distinguished soldier who carried the works outside Barcelona by a charge of dismounted cavalry, was often one of the party. On one occasion Peterborough lingered on till the afternoon, when Rich coaxed his fire into a clear flame and cooked his own dinner on his own gridiron. His lordship was himself a famous cook and he gladly sat down to his meal, with a bottle or two of sound port from a neighbouring tavern. The feast so

delighted him that he proposed himself for another day, and came, bringing several friends on the Saturday following. The gathering soon resolved itself into a Club to meet during the season with a strict limitation of the fare to beefsteaks, port wine, and milk punch.

The other version is given by Edwards, in his "Anecdotes of Painting." According to this, Lambert, the principal scene-painter at Covent Garden, often received persons of quality in his painting-room, and while they were with him, not liking to leave them, he ate his dinner in their presence —a beefsteak, which he broiled himself on the studio fire. Others were tempted to join in the picnic, and the custom became so prevalent that Lambert's impromptu guests organised themselves into a club which assembled at the Shakespeare Tavern. The Beefsteaks also met "in a noble room at the top of Covent Garden Theatre." Hogarth was admitted a member, and with him Churchill and Wilkes. Garrick became an honoured member. On one occasion he lingered so long in the Club that he was late when due upon the stage, and when reproached by his brother-patentee, Ford, and reminded of the "Stake" he had in the theatre, Drury Lane, replied, "My good friend, I was thinking of my 'steak' in the other house."

In 1785 the number was increased from twenty-four to twenty-five, so as to admit George, Prince

of Wales, who would not become an honorary member, and there being no vacancy the enlargement was decreed. The Royal Dukes of Clarence and Sussex were also members, and Charles, Duke of Norfolk, a man with an enormous appetite, who could consume three or four pounds of beefsteak, and would afterwards chop up a Spanish onion and beetroot and eat them as a salad, washed down by the full-bodied port of the club. Arthur Murphy, the dramatist, John Kimball, and Hogarth were "Steaks," and Charles Muir its bard. There were other Beefsteak Clubs, one at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, in 1749, of which Peg Woffington was president, the only female member who was admitted, on the ground that she played boys' parts so charmingly. The Beefsteak Club of to-day is very prosperous and fashionable, and is dealt with on a later page.

Social and convivial clubs were not limited to the metropolis. One flourished in Liverpool in the middle of the eighteenth century, entitled "The Society of Bucks." There was another about the same time of prosperous manufacturers, who met of an evening to talk over the affairs of the day. They drank strong ale together, their expenses being limited to $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ per head, a halfpenny for tobacco and fourpence for the ale, which was increased later to six-pennyworth of punch. In Manchester there was a club of tradesmen, who met

after business hours and talked till 8 p.m., when it was summarily closed by John Shaw, who kept the house. It was his custom to enter the great room when the clock struck and cry, "Eight o'clock, gentlemen," after which he would not allow another drop to be served. If people would not clear out then, he called for his horsewhip and cracked it about their ears. When this failed, Molly, the housemaid, was called in with her pail and flooded the floor with water, and the members had to disperse with wet feet. John Shaw was a famous punch-maker and carried a long gravy-spoon in his pocket, like a carpenter does his foot-rule, or a doctor his stethoscope. The punch was served out in "p" and "q" bowls, the first being one shilling, and the second sixpence, a bowl. The meeting became in due course an organised club under the name of "Shaw's," with a strong political bias; the members were Tory to the backbone, all for Church and King.

The Scramble Club of that day was a sort of luncheon-house in the Unicorn, or "Old Troggetts" in Church Street, High Street, into which business men rushed and hurriedly wolfed a fourpenny pie and drank a glass of ale, returning forthwith to their work. They presently decided they might as well have a joint cooked, but still they ate it in great haste, and as there was no time to make out a regular bill the amount was brought in chalked upon

the lid of the salt box. The toast of the "Salt Box Lid" was long preserved, and given at dinners more formal than that which gained the gathering the name of the "Scramble Club." A system of fines and forfeits obtained at the Club and were imposed upon members when they offended. There was a penalty for marrying, for becoming a father, for moving to another house. The fines were exacted in a certain number of bottles of wine. They were also imposed for refusal to take the chair at dinner, or leaving it to ring the bell, or allowing a stranger to pay for anything consumed.

Preston in Lancashire owned a club between 1771 and 1841, called the Oyster and Parched Pea Club. It met on Mondays in the winter at 7.30, when a barrel of oysters was opened at the equal expense of all present. It appointed an official called Mr. Oystericus, whose duty it was to get the oysters from London; also a Cellarius, who had to lay down the port; and a Clerk of the Peas, who was liable to be fined if no peas were supplied. There were also fines here, payable in oysters—a gallon for a son born, and half a gallon for a daughter, and so on.

When Sydney Smith went to Edinburgh, in 1797, as tutor to young Mr. Hicks Beach of Netherbay, he entered freely into the social and intellectual life of the place. It was the golden age of the Modern Athens, when such men as

Henry Erskine, Adam Ferguson, Tubal Stewart, Henry Brougham, Henry Cockburn, and Thomas Campbell were rising into fame. The proposal that they should meet together was eagerly adopted and led to the formation of a small club, known as the Friday Club from the day of its regular meetings. This, of course, had nothing to do with the Friday Street Club of London, which met on Wednesdays in the last years of the seventeenth century, and that in which it is said the first idea of the Bank of England was started. The Edinburgh Club owed its beginning to Sir Walter Scott, then the youthful sheriff of Selkirkshire, aided by Geoffrey G. S. Murray and many of the eminent men above mentioned. Sydney Smith joined it and it became one of the most delightful resorts. "Our clubs come on admirably," Geoffrey writes to his mother. "We have got four or five of the great literati and we sit chatting every week until two in the morning." Edinburgh was famous for its clubs and some were quaint enough. One was the Soaping Club, the motto of which was that "Every man should soap his own beard," in other words, "Indulge his own humour." The Lawn-market Club was an association of a dram-drinking, newsmongering gathering of citizens, who met every morning early, and after proceeding to the post-office to pick up letters and news, adjourned to the public-house to refresh. There was a Viscera

Club that flourished till quite a late date, the members of which were pledged to dine off food from the entrails of animals, such as kidneys, liver, and tripe. This is akin to the Haggis Club of more modern date. A few of the earlier clubs, with quaint names covering the idea for which they were produced, may be mentioned here. There was the Lying Club, the Everlasting Club, the members of which were supposed to be divided like watches at sea, so that the club might be continually kept up, day and night, from year to year ; the Oddfellows, the Thespian, the Great Bottle Club, the "Je ne sais pas" Club, held in the Star and Garter Hotel in Pall Mall, to which the Royal Princes and most of the aristocracy belonged, and the "No Pay No Liquor" Club. The *Spectator* satirises all clubs by inventing many quite impossible names, such as the Ugly Club, the Fighting Club, the Doldrums, the Humdrums, and the Lovers' Club ; it records also clubs of Fat Men, Tall Men, One-eyed Men, and Men who live in the same street.

An extravagant club existed in 1772, composed of the fashionable young men of the day, who went for a time by the name of Macaronis. Before that date during the earlier part of the reign of George II., the appellation of *beaux* had been commonly used, to which the name of *fribbles* had succeeded for a time. Then a number of young fellows

who had made the grand tour brought back a number of freaks and fancies from Italy, and chief among them an extravagant fondness for the popular paste called macaroni. They organised themselves into a club at which it was a standing dish, and the members soon became known as "Macaronis." It was their pride to carry to the utmost excess every description of dissipation, effeminacy of manners, and modish novelty of dress. "Whence originated this prolific family?" asks a writer in the *Universal Magazine* of this date. "They are the offspring of a many-headed monster in Pall Mall, produced by the demoniac committee of depraved taste and exaggerated fancy, conceived in the Courts of France and Italy and brought forth in England." Horace Walpole traces their birth to the influx of wealth brought home from India. "Lord Chatham begot the East India Company; the East India company begot Lord Clive; Lord Clive begot the Macaronis; they begot poverty, and all the race are still living."

These Macaronis followed an extravagant fashion in dress. They wore an immense *chignon* of false hair behind, under a very small cocked hat; they appeared in tight close-cut jacket, waistcoat, and breeches, and carried an enormous walking stick adorned with long tassels. The vogue of the Macaronis was extraordinary. Every one aped their fashions. Even the clergy had their wigs combed, their

clothes cut, their delivery refined "*à la* Macaroni." Ladies had their hair dressed with the great bunch behind.¹ Macaroni music was composed and songs set to it ; Macaroni articles abounded everywhere. The shop windows were filled with caricatures and prints of this new tribe ; portraits were plentiful of "Turf Macaronis," "Macaroni scholars," "Macaroni divines," and "Parade Macaronis."

The fashion was too outrageous to last long. After a year or so they ceased to entertain the town with their foolish costumes and exaggerated nosegays. "They have lost all their money," was their requiem, "exhausted their credit, and can no longer game for £20,000 a night."

¹ One verse of a catch of the period ran :

Five pounds of hair they wear behind,
The ladies to delight O !
Their senses give unto the wind,
To make themselves a fright O !
This fashion who does e'er bestow,
I think a simple tony,
For he's a fool, say what you will,
Who is a Macaroni.

CHAPTER II

CLUBS IN GENERAL—continued

WHITE'S CLUB IN ST. JAMES' STREET—ORIGIN AND GROWTH—NOTABLE MEMBERS—GREAT PERSONAGES—“OLD” CLUB AND “YOUNG” CLUB.

THE earliest of all clubs constituted in London, according to the modern ideas of a club, is White's in St. James' Street, which still survives and flourishes. It was originally a chocolate-house, and was opened in 1698 by one Francis White in St. James' Street, on the same site as that now occupied by Boodle's Club. Nothing very positive is known as to this White; but from his will, which is still extant, he was probably of Italian extraction. His wife was undoubtedly an Italian, and there is a mention in this will of her sister, Angela Maria, wife of Tomaso Casanova of Verona, and of White's aunt, Nicoletta Tomaso, of the same city. It is suggested¹ that White's name was Englished from the Italian Bianco or Bianchi. White undoubtedly prospered, and left legacies of the value of £2,750. His

¹ In “History of White's,” two handsome quarto volumes, by the Hon. Algernon Burke, from which I have largely quoted in these pages.

widow, Elizabeth White, succeeded him in the business of the chocolate-house and did well. She had the wit to allow the famous Heidegger to use her establishment as a centre for the sale of tickets for his entertainments, the masquerades, ridottos, and balls, that were so much in vogue in fashionable society at the commencement of the eighteenth century. The chocolate-house was in an admirable position, in the very centre of the best part of the town, with a small garden attached, and it received widespread patronage from what we now call "smart" people. The widow White, as she first appeared in the rate books of Westminster parish, afterwards changing to Mrs. White, and latterly to Madame White, remained in possession of the chocolate-house until 1725 or later, and in 1730 her husband's (Francis White's) assistant and possibly her own partner, John Arthur, by name, appeared as the tenant of the premises.

Long before this, in consequence of a destructive fire, by which the original house was destroyed in 1733, on April 28, with the loss of all the earliest records, several of the more exclusive patrons of the chocolate-house desiring to keep themselves private and apart from the rest of the company, monopolised a portion of the premises, which was entirely reserved for them. This new departure was followed by others. The club called the "Brothers" was formed by some of the frequenters

of Buttons' Coffee-House, which had its headquarters in the Thatched House. Johnson's famous Literary Club,¹ "The Club" as it was called, came into existence at the Turk's Head in Gerrard Street, and the Cocoa Tree and Boodle's were formed in the same year. In due course Francis White seems to have elected in favour of a small constituency and found it no doubt a more profitable business to give up the chocolate-house exclusively for the use of the members of the club.

The first rules of the original club have been preserved in the early records of the club as re-constituted after the fire. They refer chiefly to election, which was strictly by ballot, with a quorum of twelve members, a clear week having elapsed since proposal, and one black ball to exclude. A subscription was exacted from members of "one guinea a year towards having a good cook." Only members of the club could be admitted to dinner or supper; the latter was to be on the table at ten o'clock and the bill brought in at twelve midnight. Election was limited to the period when Parliament was sitting. These rules were no doubt drawn up at the time of the original formation of the club. When White moved from his first premises on the east side of St. James' Street, to a house on the west side, three doors below St. James' Place, the site formed part of the north end of the

¹ See post, p. 72.

present Arthur's Club. White's next-door neighbour, further up the street, was John Arthur, at that time his servant and assistant manager.

White's Club seems to have been popular and in much request from the first. Many well-known people sought election. Colley Cibber, Poet Laureate, was proud to belong to it and rub shoulders with fashionable people, for he was a snob, a most determined snob. Pope, in attacking Colley Cibber in his "*Dunciad*," speaks of him as a prominent figure at White's, and passes some scathing strictures on the club itself as a famous "gaming-house much frequented by low company." Swift, in his "*Essay of Education*," says the Earl of Orford "never passed White's Club house (the common rendezvous of infamous sharpers and noble cullies) without bestowing a curse on that famous Academy, as the bane of half the English aristocracy." The character of White's may be gathered from the fact that Hogarth pointedly refers to it in Plate IV. of the "*Rake's Progress*," which illustrates the Rake's arrest for debt at the corner of Radley Street. The picture appears to have been painted before the fire in 1733, after which White's had moved temporarily further down the street to Gaunt's Coffee House, but Hogarth, before the plate was published in 1735, inserted a sign projecting from the front of the house, bearing the name "White's," while from a thunder-cloud above a flash of forked lightning

darts its barbed point at the club. White's, in fact, had already become notorious for high play, and the painter has further emphasised the fact by inserting in the foreground a group of street boys gambling with cards and dice. A scathing reference to White's is made in Mrs. Delaney's correspondence. Referring to a great sum recently lost at hazard, she writes : "What a curse to the nation is such a pit of destruction as White's ! It is a sad thing that in a Christian country it should continue undemolished."

Another member admitted to White's, with no particular claim to distinction, but useful in his generation, was the Heidegger already mentioned. He was the son of a Swiss clergyman in Zurich, and was already fifty years of age when he came to London, having led a Bohemian life, till then, on the Continent. He was mixed up at first in theatrical matters, produced operas, and was for a time, in 1713, manager of the Haymarket Theatre. He made a name and achieved fortune by reviving masquerades, which had sunk into disrepute since the days of Charles I., whose Queen, Henrietta Maria, gave one at Whitehall on a Sunday, to the extreme displeasure of a riotous Puritan mob. They were still opposed when Heidegger revived them ; the bishops preached against them, but a Bill brought into the House of Parliament to forbid them by law was thrown out. White's was

employed as the office for issuing tickets to subscribers, and great pains were taken to keep the gatherings select.

Heidegger was supposed to be the ugliest man of his day. A good story is told of a trick played upon him, which well illustrates the boisterous habits of the time. Heidegger greatly disliked sitting for his portrait, and a party of practical jokers, headed by the Duke of Montagu, laid a plan to victimise him. He was invited to supper, beguiled into intoxication, and when insensible a wax mould was taken of his face. A man was found of his height and figure, who, wearing the wax mask, was introduced to the next ball. The King appeared in person as one of the patrons, and on his arrival the sham Heidegger ordered the band to play the treasonable Jacobite air, "Over the water to Charlie." The ballroom was at once thrown into indescribable confusion, the real Heidegger was beside himself with rage and terror, but quickly ordered the band to substitute the National Anthem. Then the sham Heidegger returned, taking advantage of the momentary absence of the real one, and sharply reprimanded the leader of the band for altering the tune and again ordered "Over the water" to be struck up again, and the result was a worse uproar. Some officers of the Guards who were present would have kicked Heidegger into the street, but were restrained by the Duke of Cumberland, who

knew the truth, and Heidegger himself was taken into the presence of the King, where he made the most humble apology, declaring that the devil had taken his shape to ruin him. At this moment his double appeared, and poor Heidegger fainted at the King's feet. When he recovered the whole situation was explained to him, but Heidegger swore that he would never give another ball unless the wax mould was destroyed.

The most prominent personages, political and social, were numbered among the first members of White's. An exact list of them cannot be given, as all the early records were destroyed in the fire of 1733, but many no doubt appeared in the list prepared by Robert Arthur. He had succeeded to the management, replacing his father, John Arthur, who had been the partner of the widow of Francis White. Robert Arthur rebuilt the old premises on the west side of the street and re-occupied them in 1736. The total members were no more than eighty-two, a number they were loth to increase. Few vacancies occurred, barely half a dozen per annum, and they were filled up but slowly. This led eventually to the formation of the Young Club, which assembled in the same house with the friendly consent of the Old Club, who accorded many favours to the young aspirants. The junior body indeed became a regular place of probation, through which alone admission to the senior club could be obtained.

This lasted till 1781, some forty years in all, when at last the two clubs were amalgamated and formed one, occupying the premises on the east side of St. James' Street, where White's still stands.

A brief reference may be made to some of the more prominent members of those early days. Sir Robert Walpole, the famous minister and great Whig leader, was one. His chief rival, Pulteney, was another ; so was Bubb Dodington, a close adherent of Frederick, Prince of Wales. Dodington was a mean, mercenary man, possessed of vast wealth, but who adorned his state bed with the gold and silver lace picked off his old coats. Lord Chesterfield (of the "Letters" to his son) used White's much ; also the third Duke of Marlborough, whose sister, Lady Diana Spencer, nearly married Prince Frederick, and who subsequently married the fourth Duke of Bedford, was an early member of the club. Other members of the Old Club were the Earls of Cholmondeley and Scarbrough, Sir Paul Methuen, a person said to "possess a mixture of Spanish formality and English roughness" ; professional men such as the lawyer Nicholas Fazackerly, and Dr. Nathaniel Broxhome, the celebrated physician. Colley Cibber and Heidegger have been already mentioned.

John Dalrymple, second Earl of Stair, was foremost amongst the band of distinguished soldiers who frequented the club. He had been the great

Duke of Marlborough's A.D.C., and stood by his side in most of the battles in the Low Countries. He was even more eminent as a diplomatist, and notable for his skill in obtaining information by ways that cannot be admired. When ambassador in Paris, he anticipated the advice Napoleon gave to Talleyrand, "*tenez bon table et soignez les femmes.*" The story is told that he tried many methods to worm a secret out of an ambassador's wife. First he made love to her, but to no purpose; then he played cards and lost to her, with the same result; next he won a large sum of money from her, and when she was heavily in his debt she gave way sooner than ask her husband for the money. No wonder that the Duke of Orleans said that nothing, however secret, could be kept from Lord Stair. "Through poverty, one-half of the French nation were bribed by him to become spies on the other." Stair was, however, a staunch supporter of his master, and when quite a young attaché at The Hague, he made a famous reply to the French plenipotentiary, who drank to the health of the King of France as the rising sun, and was followed by the Austrian, who described him as the moon. Dalrymple rose and drank to his master, "Joshua the son of Nun" (meaning William III.), who commanded the sun and moon to stand still.

Earl Ligonier was another of Marlborough's famous lieutenants often seen at White's, who had

fought through all the wars. He was the only captain in Lord North's regiment who came out of Blenheim alive. At Malplaquet he was unwounded, although twenty-two bullets passed through his clothes.

A third was Lord Tyrawley, who had seen much service in Spain under Lord Galway, in the war of the Spanish Succession, and was long a noted man about town in London until transferred to Dublin as Commander-in-Chief in Ireland.

And last, though not least, the Marquis of Granby, a man of undaunted courage, whose brilliant services gained him universal esteem. His popularity in England was proved in a very curious fashion. The Marquis of Granby became a very favourite public-house sign, and it is still to be constantly met with. The Navy was represented by the famous Admiral George Anson, afterwards Viscount Anson, already mentioned,¹ who was elected in 1774, after his memorable four years' voyage round the world. He brought back only one of the four ships which had sailed with him in 1740, and with barely two hundred men of his crews, but he brought in a Spanish galleon, which he had captured in the teeth of the French fleet, with a prize of half a million of treasure.

The waiting list at Young White's included many men already distinguished, before they won the honours of the Old Club. Lord Cathcart,

¹ See ante, p. 17.

for example, who was wounded by a pistol shot at Fontenoy and kept the bullet in his head for thirty years. He was so proud of it that he wore a black patch high up on his cheek bone, and it is a prominent feature in his portrait painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Conway was another military officer who was greatly blamed for the failure of the expedition against Rochefort in 1757; so was Lord George Sackville, who would not forgive Conway, and who himself did not do particularly well at Minden. George Selywn was one of the most notable among the young men with Gilly Williams, Edgcumbe, the Earl of March, afterwards the Duke of Queensberry, the notorious "Old Q," and Horace Walpole.

George Selwyn was "sent down" from Oxford in 1744 for excess at a wine party. In London he chose White's chocolate-house as his headquarters, and quickly made friends on all sides. He was soon the typical man about town, a professed wit, and was credited with being the author of all the good sayings of his time. His tastes were very varied; to a passionate love of children he joined the strange predilection for executions, and never missed a hanging. He occupied a front seat at the execution of the rebels after the '45 on Tower Hill, and gloated on the spectacle of Lord Balmerino when he felt the edge of the axe, read the inscription on his coffin, and presented his wig to the headsman.

“Dick” Edgcumbe was the one of the party at Walpole’s Villa, Strawberry, who painted the coat of arms for White’s Club, and which, by some accident is now in the possession of Arthur’s Club. Walpole gave the blazon : “Vert (for a card table) between three parolis (aces) proper on a chevron sable two rouleaux in saltire between two dice proper ; in a canton sable a ball (for election) argent. Supporters : An old knave of clubs on the dexter, a young knave on the sinister side ; both accoutred proper. Crest : Issuing out of an earl’s coronet, an arm shaking a dice box, all proper. Motto, alluding to the crest : ‘Cogit amor nummi.’ The arms encircled with a claret bottle ticket by way of order.” The satire of this coat of arms of course refers to the high play so constantly in progress at White’s, of which more in a later chapter.¹

The elder Pitt, afterwards Lord Chatham, was a member of the Young Club and so were all his colleagues in the famous administration that from 1757 made England respected and feared on the Continent. His chief associate, the Duke of Newcastle, belonged to Old White’s. Other ministers were Richard Granville, Lord Temple, and George Grenville, secretary of the Navy, and author of the Stamp Act that led to the declaration of American Independence. Admiral Sir George, afterwards Lord, St. Vincent was one of Chatham’s most brilliant agents, the great

¹ See post, chapter “Play, past and present.”

sailor who brought the West Indies to the British Crown and won the naval battle of St. Vincent. Lady Rodney, when her husband had been greatly impoverished by gaming debts and election expenses, sent the hat round for him at White's, but the money was really found by a Frenchman, the Marshal de Biron. White's could proudly point to other gallant Admirals on its list ; to George Keppel, third Earl of Albemarle, who captured Havannah in 1762 ; to Charles Saunders, who co-operated with General Wolfe in the assault of the Heights of Abraham ; and to Boscawen, who went by the name of "Old Dreadnought." The year 1762 saw the election to White's of Robert Clive, not long after Plassey and the conquests that laid the foundation of British India. This was when he was at the acme of his famed popularity ; he had come home for the second time ; on the third and last it was to face obloquy and persecution, ending in death by his own hand. The soldiers whose failures and misfortunes a few years later cost us the American colonies were all members of White's—Burgoyne, whose surrender at Saratoga was the final disaster of the war ; Howe, Clinton, and Lord Cornwallis. Lord Bute, the upright but obstinate and narrow-minded minister, whose counsels led George III. so much astray, was a member of White's.

Already, by 1755, the two White's Clubs had become so popular that the number of members

in the two constituencies had reached three hundred and fifty, although the Old Club had maintained its exclusiveness and was still limited to a hundred and twenty. Robert Arthur was still proprietor, and to lodge his clients suitably he moved to larger premises. He was in a position to buy the great house in St. James' Street, three doors down from Piccadilly on the eastern side, which with certain improvements is still White's Club. Its last owner was Sir Whistler Webster, and at some time previous it was the residence of that famous old grandee, the Countess of Northumberland, who never suffered her daughter-in-law the Duchess of Somerset, to sit down in her presence. The Duke of Bedford, the Duchess of Newcastle, widow of the first Duke, and Sir William Windham were also successively occupiers. Robert Arthur retired from the club after its transfer, and was followed by his assistant and son-in-law, "Bob" Mackreth, later a member of Parliament. Mackreth, it seems, when relieved of active management of the club affairs, turned his attention to usury, and lent money to Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford, who, to discharge the obligation, nominated him for his pocket borough at Castle Rising, Yorkshire.

Horace Walpole, in writing of this, calls it a disgraceful transaction. Mackreth was destined to become notorious. He continued his money-lending transactions and a Mr. Fox Lane, whom he thought to be on the verge of ruin, brought an action against

him, which was given against Mackreth. The Court found that he had taken advantage of the young man during his minority and ordered him to refund some £20,000, with all costs. Mackreth appealed to the Lord Chancellor, lost his case, and went again to the Lords, who were also against him and fixed the costs at the highest ever known. Mr. Fox Lane's counsel had been Sir John Scott, afterwards Lord Eldon, and Mackreth owed him a great grudge. Meeting Scott one day in Lincoln's Inn Fields, he fiercely accosted him, calling him a liar and scoundrel, and challenged him to mortal combat. Sir John Scott declined the honour and took legal proceedings, with the result that Mackreth was sentenced to six months' imprisonment and a fine of £100, and all this while still sitting member for Ashburton. Yet towards the close of his long and chequered career—he lived till he was ninety-four—he received the honour of knighthood and died a rich man, still owning the freehold of White's, much house property, a landed estate in Cumberland, and a plantation in the West Indies.

A more reputable and still more remarkable career, starting from the humblest origin, was that of Sir Thomas Rumbold, Bart., who began as a bootblack at White's and ending as Governor of Madras became possessed of an enormous fortune. The boy, of whom Mrs. Thrale speaks as having the air and look of a man of quality, had been first

engaged by Mackreth, at that time major domo under Robert Arthur, to clean the members' boots, but soon ran off to India, where he found employment as clerk in the Company's offices at Calcutta. He volunteered to serve in the field under Clive, and acted as his A.D.C. at the battle of Plassey. On one occasion he performed a service of great danger in carrying despatches, for which he was publicly thanked. Returning to his civil employment, he rose speedily, and in 1766 took his seat as a member of Council in Bengal. His appointment was criticised with much malevolence by those who felt they had been passed over, but was defended warmly by Lord Clive, and he was presently promoted to be Governor of Patna, a post that gave him great opportunities for acquiring wealth. He succeeded Lord Pigot as Governor of Madras, and was created a baronet. But Rumbold had to face ill fortune. He was made to share the imputations that brought impeachment upon Warren Hastings, and was threatened with a Bill of Pains and Penalties introduced by Henry Dundas, but he returned to England, entered Parliament, and gained a seat also for his son, who was now a member of White's. In the House Rumbold concluded a compact with Richard Rigby, who had been Paymaster-General and was called upon to refund large sums by Edward Burke, who had succeeded him in the office. Rumbold now stepped in and agreed to save Rigby from impeach-

ment if Rigby could stop the Bill of Pains and Penalties. No proof of this bargain was ever produced, but the desired result was undoubtedly attained. In the end Rigby's nephew and heir married Rumbold's daughter. A coarse but interesting caricature is in the possession of White's, showing Sir Thomas Rumbold disgorging rupees into a cauldron held by Dundas. The following lines were written in memory of the foregoing :

When Bob Mackreth, with upper servant's pride,
"Here sirrah, clean my boots," to Rumbold cried,
He humbly answered, "Yea, Bob";
But since returned from India's plundered strand
The purse-proud Rumbold now on such command
Would stoutly answer, "Nay, Bob."

CHAPTER III

CLUBS IN GENERAL—continued

THE COCOA TREE—ALMACK'S—BROOKS'—MORE ABOUT WHITE'S—WATIER'S.

BEFORE proceeding further with the history of White's, which has been brought down into the eighteenth century, it will be well to keep abreast of contemporary club movements and give some account of other famous houses that came into being about this time.

The Cocoa Tree, originally a chocolate-house, in Queen Anne's reign was noted for its Tory principles. It was said in those days that "a Whig will no more go to the Cocoa Tree or Ozinda's, than a Tory will be seen at the Coffee-House of St. James" in the street of that name. The Cocoa Tree seems to have been converted into a club about 1746, and became the headquarters of the Jacobites. The Duke of Cumberland says: "Horace Walpole has given the Pretender's coach to Brigadier Mordaunt on condition he rode up to London in it. 'That I will, sir,' said he, 'and drive until it stops of its own accord at the Cocoa Tree.' " Gibbon,

who was a member in 1762, speaks of it as "a respectable body which . . . affords every evening a sight truly English. Twenty or thirty perhaps of the first men in point of fashion and fortune supping at little tables covered by a napkin in the middle of a coffee-room upon a bit of cold meat or a sandwich and drinking a glass of punch." The Cocoa Tree was notorious for high play and not always of the most unimpeachable honesty.

Almack's took its name from its proprietor, a Scotchman, whose real name was Macall and the "Almack" an anagram. He kept the Thatched House tavern in St. James' Street, and managed a small gaming club founded in 1764 by twenty-seven noblemen and gentlemen, among whom were the Duke of Roxburgh, the Duke of Portland, the Earl of Strathmore, Mr. Crewe (afterwards Lord Crewe), and Charles James Fox. It was first placed in Pall Mall, on the site of the British Institution, and owed its origin, no doubt, to a rivalry with White's, whose high tone it fully admitted, and whose fame and popularity it soon ran close. By electing a large number of the Young White's, it cut off the supply of recruits for the old club. Yet it aimed at great exclusiveness, and one of the early rules was to the effect that "any member of this society who shall become a candidate for any other club (Old White's excepted) shall be *ipso facto* excluded and his name struck out of the

book." Another regulation was that "dinner shall be brought at seven."

Almack was allowed to make no profit out of the wines the club approved of, which he was forbidden to sell out of the house. The rest of the rules bore chiefly upon gaming ; such as "no gaming in the eating-room, except tossing up for reckonings," on penalty of paying the whole bill of the members present. "Every person playing at the new guinea table do keep fifty guineas before him, and every person playing at the twenty-guinea table do not keep less than twenty guineas before him." Gibbon speaks very favourably of this Almack's Club. "The style of living though somewhat expensive is exceedingly pleasant, and notwithstanding the rage of play I have found more entertainment and rational society than in any other club to which I belong." There was an inner society in Almack's, the Macaronis, already mentioned¹ and their foreign tastes and fashions described. The first Almack's after the migration to St. James' Street and the creation of Brooks' Club, was converted into Goosetree's, and was a favourite house with William Pitt, who visited it often, his personal adherents following him there.

The same Almack or Macall opened in 1765 a suite of assembly rooms in King Street, St. James', which became in later years the noted resort of

¹ See *ante*, p. 26 sqq.

certain fashionable ladies, who terrorised society and held the highest and most famous people suppliant at their feet. This Almack's was a club for the two sexes, with this peculiarity, that the ladies nominated and voted for the gentlemen, and *vice versa*. Some very prominent people came to be blackballed. The balls took place once a week for the three months of the season at a subscription of ten guineas, and supper was given. The most rigorous and capricious fancy ruled at the ballot box. Men's tickets were not transferable and vouchers for them were very difficult to obtain.

Brooks' Club was the same as the Almack's in Pall Mall, but after a few years it passed into the hands of a wine merchant and money-lender named Brooks, who took it over from Almack after some disagreement as to the election of two candidates. Brooks moved with it to St. James' Street, on the west side, into a handsome house nearly opposite the White's of that date. Amongst its earliest members were Burke, Gibbon, Sheridan, Wilberforce, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Garrick, Hume, and Charles James Fox. When Pitt flashed suddenly into political fame by his maiden speech, the latter carried him in triumph to Brooks' and secured his immediate election. The honour did not move Pitt greatly and he was slow to fall in with the ways of the club, having no very deep affection for play. He remained a member for many years, but rarely

appeared there, having a decided preference for White's, to which he was presently elected, just before he became Chancellor of the Exchequer. Then began the rivalry between the two clubs. Fox at Brooks' was surrounded by the members of the Opposition and Pitt at White's identified it with the Court party. Thus the political colour of each club was gradually emphasised ; White's was the Tory centre and Brooks' the Liberal, as it is in a measure to this day. George IV. as Prince of Wales, coming under the influence of Fox, threw in his lot with the latter club, where he could constantly consort with the man who backed him in his opposition to the King, his father. When George III. went out of his mind, it was a common practice at Brooks' to say, "I play the lunatic," at écarté, instead of "I play the King," and this in the presence of the Royal Princes.

Sir Philip Francis, a boon companion of Fox, was created a K.C.B. during the short administration of that statesman. The new knight proudly sported his order at night at the whist table in Brooks' and was jeered at by a fellow-member, Roger Wilbraham. "So they have rewarded you with a pretty bit of red ribbon. I wonder what they will give me ?" Francis, much annoyed and having a large stake on the rubber, retorted angrily, "A halter, and be ——d to you !"

Fox spent all his time at Brooks' that he could

spare from the House of Commons. He lived hard by in St. James' Street, in a lodging-house. Rising late he held a levée of his disciples and followers, gamblers all, from the club. The sight was not edifying. "His bristly black person, and shaggy breast quite open, rarely purified by any ablutions, was wrapped in a foul linen night-gown and his bushy hair dishevelled." Thus attired he discussed politics and good-humouredly dictated his views, the Prince of Wales, the most attentive of his listeners, sitting, so to speak, at his feet.

Fox was the most desperate gambler. He was an admirable player, both at whist and piquet. Good judges at Brooks' declared that he might easily have made £4,000 a year, if he had limited himself to these games of skill. But faro was his passion and he was almost invariably unfortunate. Only once indeed he won £8,000, part of which he paid away to his creditors and speedily lost the remainder. His pockets were constantly empty and he was often unable to meet his most trifling expenses, so that he was reduced to borrowing money from the waiters of the club. He could not even pay the chairmen who carried him to and from the House of Commons. The Jews, who lent him great sums, charged him the most exorbitant premiums, and the room or ante-room where they waited to dun him he called the Jerusalem Chamber. Lord Holland, Fox's father,

had brought him up badly, gave him a lavish allowance and fostered his propensity for play. He let his son have full swing in youth, and strongly urged that nothing should be done which might break his spirit, adding, "The world will do that for him."

Fox was always at the mercy of his creditors. Executions were frequently put into his house and all worth taking carried off. His library was seized and his books sold, many of them presentation copies (such as the first volume of Gibbon's "Rome," enriched by Fox's original remarks). The book just named was endorsed with this statement: "Gibbon had said at Brooks' that there could be no salvation for the country until the heads of six principal members of the Cabinet were laid upon the table, yet eleven days later Gibbon accepts an office under the Government as a Lord of Trade."

Despite his crushing losses Fox preserved an equal mind. Once he left the club in a state of desperation, and next morning a friend called expecting to find the frantic gamester stretched upon the floor. Fox was seated at a table calmly reading "Herodotus" in Greek. "What else can I do?" he asked imperturbably. "I've lost my last shilling." Sometimes, when worn out with agitation and suspense, he would lay his head upon the card table and fall into a profound sleep. Fox was known to have played without intermission at Brooks' from 10 p.m.

one night to 6 p.m. the following day. General Fitzpatrick was his antagonist, and a waiter stood by to tell the sleepy players when there was a change of deal.

There is a story that when Fox had won a large sum, a creditor who held his bond came and pressed for payment. Fox refused, saying his debts of honour had the first claim on him. The man remonstrated, then asked for the bond and threw it into the fire. "Now it is a debt of honour," said Fox, and promptly paid it.

In later years Brooks' was still a roystering centre, where coarse jests were interchanged and serious quarrels occurred. Daniel O'Connell was a turbulent member, who hated Lord Alvanley and called him a "bloated buffoon." Alvanley challenged O'Connell, who had, however, registered a vow after killing an antagonist, D'Esterre, that he would never "go out" again, and Morgan O'Connell took up his father's quarrel. Two shots were exchanged without casualty, and the opponents were parted, no apology having been made.

Daniel O'Connell's conduct at the club elicited a vigorous protest from Sir Francis Burdett, who addressed his fellow members in a strong letter about 1835. He submitted to them the question, "Whether the late conduct of Mr. O'Connell does not unfit him for the society of gentlemen and render him unworthy to continue a member of

the club?" Sir Francis referred to O'Connell's vulgar and injurious language towards the peerage during his late tour in Scotland, to the gross and scandalous abuse which he indiscriminately lavished against all who offended him, while persisting in refusing the only atonement open to a gentleman, and particularly to the scurrility of his invective against Mr. Raphael, a member of the club who had charged him with extracting money from him to secure his election at Carlow. Raikes, from whom I am quoting, does not agree with Sir F. Burdett, and blames him for the existing state of things. He apostrophises Sir Francis, assuring him his letter will have no effect. " You have long been helping to fling up dirt and fling down dignity ; you have assisted to fill up the old and respected Whig club of Fox and Fitzpatrick with a crew of vulgar Radicals ; you have transformed that room which was once the resort of wit, rank, and high breeding, into a den of low vulgar brawling demagogues ; and forsooth, because you are disgusted with your new associates you want to turn them out. You had better retire yourself, they are much more likely to turn you out. Such are the Whigs of the present day ; they begin the mischief heedlessly, then become frightened at their own work, and drop off one by one, leaving the course of destruction to be pursued by the Radicals with impunity."

Let us return to White's. The club, despite all competitions from newer rivals, continued to rank first amid such gatherings. After Mackreth, the management was undertaken by a nameless person, supposed to be a relation of his, who went by the *nom de guerre* of "Cherubim." It has been said that his real name was Chambers, but there is no authority for the statement. However, in 1770 one John Martindale became "the Master of the House" at White's. He seems to have met with some financial difficulties, and one of his first acts was to get in subscriptions overdue for five years. A circular sent to the defaulters offended many, and there were several resignations—among the rest the Duke of Rutland, Lord Berkeley, Lord Holland, and Lord Chesterfield. The last-named wrote saying that he declined to be a member any longer, and was under the impression that he had been struck off the list fourteen or fifteen years before.

An increase of two guineas subscription at the Old Club was decreed in 1772, and an addition was made to the establishment of both the Young and Old Clubs, and, no doubt to help Martindale's profits, members were expected to take their meals at the club, a fine of five shillings being imposed upon members who played in either of the clubs but did not partake of supper. It was ruled also that members who entered the dining-room before 8 p.m. were liable for their share of the club dinner,

whether they dined or not. Another loss was from the decline in high play, which had been largely transferred to Brooks'. Martindale was no doubt at a disadvantage from the closing of the old chocolate-house on the removal of the clubs to their new premises, and it was proposed to remedy this by the provision of a set dinner, for which members contracted to pay half a guinea per head. At the same time it was ruled that any member who stood out against this must pay a forfeit of five shillings. Very shortly afterwards White's was put upon a new footing by the fusion of the two clubs ; the junior joined the senior. White's became one and indivisible in the shape and on the basis on which it exists to-day. The club, unified in 1781, was limited to three hundred members. It adopted the old rules and the subscription was fixed at ten guineas.

The rivalry between the two great clubs, White's and Brooks', which had developed into positive ill-feeling, culminated in the famous duel when Colonel Lennox (afterwards Duke of Richmond), a member of White's, challenged and fought a duel with the Duke of York, a prominent member of Brooks'. The quarrel originated in the appointment of Lennox to the command of a battalion in the Coldstream Guards, of which the Duke was colonel, but without reference to him, an undoubted breach of military etiquette. The Duke very fairly

expostulated with Lennox, who replied ungraciously that the King's order was good enough for him. Lennox went further and, speaking disrespectfully of the Prince of Wales, was called to order by Colonel St. Leger and told that he should address his remarks to those who could answer them, persons of less than royal rank, that is to say. As Lennox submitted this language was "such as no gentleman ought to bear," the matter was reported to the Duke of York, who expressed his opinion that Colonel Lennox had accepted language "that no gentleman ought to bear." Lennox demanded an explanation, which the Duke declined to give, and the result was a challenge sent to his Royal Highness. They met at Wimbledon, and Lennox, who was in grim earnest, shot away a curl from the Duke's forehead. The Duke did not return the fire and refused to do so, whereupon Lennox's seconds asked the Duke to say that their principal was a man of honour and courage, but the Duke would say nothing, except that he had come out not intending to fire, and that if Colonel Lennox was not satisfied, he might fire again. In the account of the meeting published by the seconds they gave it as their opinion that both parties had acted with the most perfect coolness and intrepidity.

Great lustre, such as it was, was shed upon White's at the end of the eighteenth century and the first decade of the nineteenth, by the brilliant

comet-like progress of that by no means empty-headed fop, Beau Brummell. After ingratiating himself with the Prince of Wales and serving for a brief space in the 10th Hussars, he was elected to White's in 1798 and, leaving the Army, set up as a self-constituted leader of fashion. Possessed of good parts, a sharp tongue, a fine figure, and enormous pretensions, he seized a place as the arbiter of fashion and an unquestioned oracle in all matters of taste. He not only patronised and dictated to his fellow-members of White's, men of the highest rank and fortune, but entered into direct competition with "the first gentleman in Europe," George, Prince of Wales, his first introducer into Society and long his firm friend. The stories told of him have grown into the class known in our days as "chestnuts"; some are apocryphal, others are chiefly remarkable for their colossal impudence. His biographer denies the truth of the insults addressed to the Prince in the speech, "George, ring the bell," and the query, "Who's your fat friend?" But other stories are well authenticated. The cold from which he suffered because the landlord had put him in a room with a damp stranger; the confession, when asked if he liked vegetables, that he had once eaten a pea; when invited to give his opinion, "Do you call that thing a coat?" his many practical jokes, the sugar added to a French Marquis's powdered wig, the

calling up of Mr. Snodgrass on a freezing night to know if he really owned so odd a name ; all these are to be found in the records of past dandydom.

It can, however, be claimed for Beau Brummell that he was esteemed by clever people, and that his acquaintance was not limited to the butterflies of fashion, but comprised many of the intellectual men of the day. Crabbe, the poet, records that he was particularly pleased and amused with his conversation ; Brummell was long intimate with Sheridan, although the latter was one of the first to mark the decadence of the once autocratic beau. “ You think me a fool, do you ? ” Brummell said when Sheridan told him, on meeting him coming from Charing Cross, that there must be some mistake, because the Wise Men came from the East. “ Fool ? think you a fool ? ” said Sheridan, “ Not at all, I know you to be one.” The beau’s downfall was due entirely to his later addiction to play. At first he played whist only at White’s, and won at a sitting one night £10,000 from George Drummond, the banker. On another occasion, says Captain Jesse, he won £26,000. But his luck turned, and, with the revival of gaming that marked the first decade of the nineteenth century, he lost continually and, ruined in cash, his empire slipped from him, and he had to fly the country to escape his creditors. He crossed to Calais ; here he was at one time arrested and imprisoned for debt, and he died at

Caen in 1840 (where he had been appointed British Consul) in a lunatic asylum.

Martindale's son succeeded his father in the management of White's, and in his regime the famous bay window was built out in front. Supported by increase in the subscriptions from ten to eleven guineas, and in the entrance fee from ten to twenty guineas, Martindale became possessed of funds sufficient to enable him to greatly alter and improve the club. The principal doorway was removed lower down the street, and the space gained by taking in the entrance was joined to the morning-room and the "bow" thrown out. The plans devised were not carried out by Martindale, who disappeared about this time (1811), and Raggett, long to be associated with White's, became the "Master of the House." Raggett had been proprietor of the Roxburgh Club¹ in St. James', a gaming house, but the dinner club founded by the bibliophile Dibdin for the chief buyers at the sale of the great Roxburgh library. Raggett picked up quite a fortune by attending the gentlemen players and sweeping up the counters, representing hard cash, which had dropped under the tables on to the floor. He also opened a club at Brighton on the Old Steyne, for the convenience of the fashionable folk, members of White's and Brooks' who swarmed in the Prince of Wales' train.¹

¹ This building still stands.

The new bay window marked an era in the life of the club. It was taken possession of by Beau Brummell, still in the zenith of his fame, and became the centre of fashion. It was monopolised by the leading members, and all the less prominent, pretentious members aspired to be admitted to it. To be saluted from the bay gave a stamp and *cachet* to the fortunate passer-by, so much so, that it was at length ruled that no greeting should be accorded from the window, and the members in possession kept their hats on their heads and vouchsafed only a stony stare to their most intimate friends in the street. Recognition was not allowed, but there was no restriction on "quizzing," and eyeglasses were constantly raised to criticise appearance and solecism in attire. These strictures may be gathered from Luttrell's (a member) line in "Advice to Julia." The man whose coat had too long or too short a cape, whose "doctrines were unsound in hat, in boots, or trowsers, or cravat," who dared to drive in an ill-built gig or Tilbury, who was badly mounted and rode with an awkward seat, came in for most contemptuous glances. The softer sex did not escape :

The laugh confounds the luckless girl,
Whose stubborn hair despairs to curl ;
Who, large in foot or long in waist,
Shows want of blood as well as taste.

The ordeal of the bay window has few terrors

nowadays, but as late as Thackeray's "Newcomes" Barnes Newcome stood in it, to sneer at his cousin Clive and the old colonel passing down St. James' Street.

When Brummell disappeared his mantle fell upon the "Exquisites," at the head of whom was Lord Alvanley, Pepper Arden, and Lord Allen, Lord Sefton, Ball Hughes, the "Golden Ball," Apollo Raikes, Poodle Byng, "Kangaroo" Cooke, Berkeley Craven—all of them beaux of the finest water, epicures, gamesters, spendthrifts, extravagantly dressed, fastidious in their tastes, and constant *habitués* at White's.

Lord Alvanley had served with the Coldstream Guards in the Peninsula. He was one of the "gentlemen's sons," gallant soldiers with small professional knowledge. He came into an immense fortune, which he soon ran through. He was a *bon vivant*, who wasted great sums on the pleasures of the table. A peculiar habit of his was to read in bed and extinguish his candle by throwing his pillow at it, or thrusting it when still alight under his bolster. Viscount Allen, "King" Allen, "Cantankerous" Allen, was another Guardsman, who held his head high and made many enemies by his bitter tongue. He disapproved of the admission of bankers and merchants, whom he styled his tradesmen, to the club; himself a man of small means, an inveterate diner out, who was reminded

one day that his title was as good as board wages to him. Ball Hughes had been in the 7th Hussars and modelled himself on his Colonel, the Earl of Uxbridge, afterwards Marquis of Anglesea, who ran away with a lady of the ballet, and so unexpectedly that she was waiting at the wings on the point of appearing on the stage. "Kangaroo" Cooke was so nick-named, according to one account, because he let loose a cageful of these marsupials from a menagerie, and also because when asked by the Duke of York how he fared in the Peninsula he said he "could get nothing to eat but kangaroo." He was a Major-General, C.B., and K.C.H., who had been in the Guards and an A.D.C. to the Duke of York ; he died a bankrupt. "Poodle" Byng always drove in his curricle with a poodle dog by his side, and he was not unlike one himself with his plentiful hair. Raikes was a city man as well as a fashionable and he was called "Apollo" because, like Phœbus, he rose in the east and set in the west. Berkeley Craven shot himself after a bad Derby settling day. The Earl of Sefton was a gossip, always eager for news, and a keen gourmet, who invented a famous dish compounded of mackerels' roes. There were many noted *raconteurs* in the club ; foremost among them Alvanley, Allen, Tom Duncombe, and Sir Paul Methuen, commonly called "Emperor Paul."

The rivalry between the great clubs long continued. Admission to White's was decidedly the

most difficult of entry,¹ its members included almost all the most noble names in England. White's was essentially a gaming house, and ever a Tory Club and loyal in its adherence to the House of Hanover. The address presented by the club to George II. on his return to England in 1752, when he was generally welcomed, shows the sentiments and tastes of the club at that time. It was written by Colonel Lyttelton's brother.

“THE GAMESTERS ADDRESS TO THE KING.

“MOST RIGHTEOUS SOVEREIGN,

May it please your Majesty, we the Lords, Knights, etc., of the Society of White's, beg leave to throw ourselves at your Majesty's feet (our honour and consciences lying under the table and our fortunes being ever at stake) and congratulate your Majesty's happy return to these kingdoms. . . . We ask leave to assure your Majesty of our most unfeigned loyalty and attachment to your sacred person and that, next to the kings of diamonds, clubs, spades and hearts, we love, honour, and adore you.'

To which His Majesty was pleased to return this most gracious answer :

“MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

“I return you my thanks for your loyal address, but while I have such rivals in your

¹ Capt. Gronow's “Reminiscences.”

affection as you tell me of, I can neither think it worth preserving or regarding. I shall look upon you yourselves as a pack of cards and deal with you accordingly."

At Brooks' the play was higher and of a more gambling character than at White's. But great sums were lost and won at the last-named. A member, General Scott, the father-in-law of George Canning and the Duke of Portland, was known to have won £200,000 at White's, thanks to his sobriety and marvellous skill at the game of whist.¹

There were some epicures in White's, and at times great extravagance. On 1751 seven of the smartest young members gave a dinner regardless of expense —one dish of choice cherries from a hothouse, and only one glass was tasted out of each bottle of champagne. The club entertainments were splendid. A ball was given by White's at Burlington House on June 20, 1814, to the allied sovereigns then in London, which cost £9,849; three weeks later the cost of a dinner to the Duke of Wellington was £2,480 10s. 9d.

A fashionable club, that for a time ran White's and Brooks' very close, was Watier's, which was started about 1807 under the direct patronage of the Prince Regent. Captain Gronow, in his "Reminiscences," gives an account of its origin.

¹ General Scott, see post, p. 228.

One night at a dinner at Carlton House, when many members of the two above-mentioned clubs were present, the conversation turned upon the dinners given at a club, and the Prince inquired what they were like. Sir Thomas Stepney, one of the guests, replied that the fare was monotonous, consisting of eternal joints, beefsteaks, or boiled fowl with oyster sauce, followed by an apple tart. The Prince sent for Watier, his own chef, and invited him then and there to take a house and organise a dinner club. The house selected was in Bolton Street, Mayfair, and the club started with Watier as proprietor, Madison, the Prince's page, as manager, and Labourier, one of the cooks from the royal kitchen, as chef. It was forthwith joined by the principal dandies, Beau Brummell, among the number, a fact to be remembered by the famous protest he made when charged with leading the son of a well-known peer into disreputable gaming transactions. "Not at all," he declared, "I really did my best for the young man; I once gave him my arm all the way from White's to Watier's."

Watier's soon degenerated into the most noted hell in the town. The dinners were exquisite, Labourier was acknowledged to be equal to any of the best Parisian cooks; but it was play, the highest and wildest, that characterised the club. The favourite game was *macao*, a species of *vingt et un*, at which only one card was dealt to each player. The

winning number was nine, not twenty-one, and when a player turned up a nine "natural," he was paid three times his stake, and the sums lost and won were enormous. Raikes, in his "Diary," tells a story of Brummell, who, when he had lost a large sum, called to the waiter : " Bring me a flat candle-stick and a pistol." One of the company was a certain Mr. Hythe, reputed as mad as a hatter, and he produced a couple of loaded pistols forthwith from his pocket, which he placed on the table, coolly saying : " Mr. Brummell, if you wish to put an end to your existence, I am extremely happy to offer you the means without troubling the waiter." Upon another occasion (the story is told by Gronow) Raikes began to rally Jack Bouvierie, brother of Lord Heytesbury, on his bad luck in losing large sums. Bouvierie took it in such bad part that he threw his playbowl with the counters it contained at Raikes' head. It struck him and raised a storm which happily led to no serious results. Watier's did not live as a fashionable resort beyond 1819 ; the pace was too quick to last, and many of its leading members were ruined utterly. It then passed into the hands of a set of blacklegs, who ran it as a common gaming-house. From them it passed to the well-known Crockford, who, in partnership with a man named Taylor, set up a hazard bank, and they won a great deal of money. Crockford moved, as has been said elsewhere, in the second

year to St. James' Street, No. 50, to the house now occupied by the Devonshire Club after having been the Wellington. Graham's was another gambling house, also in St. James' Street, at No. 87. Both these will be more fully dealt with in the chapter on "Play."

CHAPTER IV

OTHER CLUBS

BOODLE'S—ARTHUR'S—"THE" CLUB, OR LITERARY CLUB—THE ALFRED—TRAVELLERS'—ROYAL NAVAL—UNITED SERVICE (THE "SENIOR")—JUNIOR UNITED SERVICE—ARMY AND NAVY ("RAG")—NAVAL AND MILITARY—THE UNION—THE ORIENTAL.

THE early part of the eighteenth century saw the establishment of many clubs of the same character as White's and Brooks' and the Cocoa Tree, and pretty nearly of the same quality. The October Club has already been mentioned. It was akin to the Beefsteak and, like it, devoted to good cheer, and composed of one hundred and fifty staunch Tory squires. It got its name from the October ale, of which much was drunk. Swift, in his journal to Stella, says on February 10, 1710-11: "We are plagued here with an October Club: a set of Parliament men who drink October beer at home, and meet every evening at a tavern near the Parliament to consult affairs and drive things to extremes against the Whigs." Some of the members did not go far enough, and seceded as red-hot Tories and "Tantivies" to form the March Club, more rampant

in their hatred of the Whigs. Neither of these clubs long survived.

Other clubs deserve a word. The Saturday Club from its day of meeting, and the Brothers, a literary club, formed to advance conversation and friendship, and reward learning deprived of interest and recommendation. "We take in none but men of wit, or men of interest," writes Swift, who framed the rules, "and, if we go on as we began, no other club in this town will be worth speaking of." Swift entertained his "Brothers" at the Thatched House Tavern at the cost of seven guineas per head. Later the club, dissatisfied at the prices, removed to the Star and Garter in Pall Mall. When the Brothers, chiefly political, was broken up, having served its purpose, Swift started the Scriblerus, a purely literary society.

A club called the Robin Hood met at a house in Essex Street, Strand, and was used as a debating society by Edmund Burke and other famous orators, and also by Oliver Goldsmith. The ladies had a club the Blue Stocking, to which male members were admitted. Dr. Johnson, an enthusiastic club man, founded a Literary Club in the Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row, at a beefsteak house, the King's Head. It lasted fourteen years and was the forerunner of the larger Literary Club, of which more directly, which met at the same address. Some of the survivors of the Ivy Lane Club met afterwards to dine at the Essex Head, in Essex Street. Dr.

Johnson framed the rules and dined there constantly. Boswell says of this club : " I believe there are few societies where there is better conversation or more decorum."

The Dilettanti Society was formed by a number of gentlemen, who had travelled much in Italy and were great lovers of the Fine Arts. Horace Walpole says of this club : " The nominal qualification is that of having been in Italy, and the real one of being drunk ; the two chiefs are Lord Middlesex and Sir Francis Dashwood, who were seldom sober the whole time they were in Italy." It met at the Thatched House Tavern, in a room hung with portraits of the members, three by Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was one. The club was rich, its revenues increased by fines, which were paid on incomes increased " by inheritance, legacy, marriage, or preferment." The club, strange to say, never built itself a residence, although it acquired several sites.

Boodle's Club seems to have been coeval with Brooks' and was on the same lines, designed for members who could not put forward the same claims to fashionable distinction. It was originally styled the *Savoir Vivre* and was known for its cuisine and the comfort of its internal arrangements. Edward Gibbon, a noted clubman, was a member, exhibiting his obese figure as he waddled in at the door. It was essentially a club for country gentlemen ; the "Sir Johns," as they were nicknamed in

those days, who were so numerous that when a servant came in to announce, "Your carriage, Sir John!" every second head in the room looked round. At one time Gillray, the caricaturist, lived next door to Boodle's, and his memory cast a gloom over the neighbourhood, for in 1815 he threw himself out of an upstairs window into the street and was killed.

Boodle's has continued to be a popular and fashionable club to this date, and it is liberally managed, hospitable to strangers, but members must dine in evening dress, except in a small dining-room, where morning clothes are permitted.

"Arthur's" was established about 1760 at 69 St. James' Street, shortly before the death of the Robert Arthur already mentioned, the master of White's chocolate-house. The present handsome house, with fluted Corinthian columns, was rebuilt in 1825.

A club, variously named as Johnson's, the Literary Club, and latterly the more pretentious name of "The Club," was originally founded by Sir Joshua Reynolds, out of the little coterie of distinguished men who were in the habit of meeting at the great painter's table in Leicester Square. Dr. Johnson seconded the idea and suggested as a model the club which he had founded in Ivy Lane, but which had languished and died through the dispersion of its members. The date of the birth of this

new Literary Club was 1764, and it met for supper on Monday evenings at seven o'clock. A few years later the day was changed to Friday and the meal to dinner, to be eaten once a fortnight during the sitting of Parliament. Its numbers grew from twelve original members to a maximum of forty. They were nomads, these select literary men, and among them were included Topham Beauclerk, Bennet Langton, Edmund Burke, Dr. Nugent, Garrick, and Oliver Goldsmith. There appears to have been a good deal of rivalry between Dr. Johnson and Burke, but the first dominated the place until his ill-temper and especially his rudeness to Burke led to his being rather shouldered out. Dr. Johnson's pretensions are referred to in the "Tour in the Hebrides." When discussing the club with him Boswell says: "About a mile from Monboddo Dr. Johnson told me, 'Sir, you got into the club by doing what a man can do. Several of the members wished to keep you out, Burke told me he doubted if you were fit for it. Now you are in none of them are sorry.' *Boswell.* 'They were afraid of you, sir, as it was you proposed me.' *Johnson.* 'Sir, they knew that if they refused you they would probably have never got into another club, I would have kept them all out.'"

Garrick did not gain admission soon or easily to the club. It is told of him that he took it for granted he would be elected, and said to Sir Joshua:

“I like it much, and I think I shall be of you.” When this was repeated to Dr. Johnson, the old bear growled : “He’ll be of us ! How does he know we’ll permit him ? The first duke in England has no right to use such language.” He was very hostile to Garrick’s pretensions. “Sir,” he said to Sir John Hawkins, “he will disturb us by his buffoonery, and if he comes up I shall blackball him.” Garrick was very sore and still earnestly desired to join, but was not elected until the eclectic rigour of the club was released and more members were admitted. It was after Garrick’s death that the club got its new name of Literary Club, and was admitted to be for professional writers of accepted status. In later years it was largely made up of peers and great personages of society. Its records, however, were full of the names of eminent people, such as Sir William Jones, the orientalist, George Goldman, the playwright, Hall, Millman, Mount Stewart Elphinstone, and Lord Stanhope. Canning, Brougham, and Macaulay were members, so were Professor Owen, Adam Smith, Whewell, Hawtry of Eton, Sir Henry Halford, Sir Roderick Murchison, Sir Edwin Head, George Grote, and Nassau Senior. The club still flourishes, and we find in Sir Henry Taylor’s “Reminiscences” an account of a dinner which he attended with ten others in 1872. Besides Philip Arteveldt, were Lord Ackermann, representing Learning and Literature ; the Arch-

bishop of Canterbury and the Dean of Westminster, the Church ; Lord Romilly, the Law ; Lord Derby and Spencer Walpole, statecraft ; and the Duke of Cleveland, high social rank. It was the custom to announce election to new members in words dictated by Gibbon : “Sir, I have the pleasure to inform you that you had last night the honour to be elected as a member of the club.”

“Taking it all in all,” says a sympathetic critic, the Literary Club has never degenerated from the high standard of intellectual gifts and personal qualities which made those unpretending suppers at the Turk’s Head an honour eagerly contended for by the wisest, wittiest and noblest of the eighteenth century.”

As time passed a change came over the character of clubs. They became more distinctive and were created to meet the needs of particular classes. The Alfred, founded in 1808, was the prototype and precursor of the Athenæum for men of letters, travellers, and dilettanti. It had its first home in Albemarle Street, and in its early days was called by the Lord Dudley of the period the “dullest place in the world . . . the bores prevail there to the exclusion of every other interest. You hear nothing but idle reports and twaddling opinions. It is the asylum of doting Tories and drivelling quidnuncs.” Lord Byron, on the other hand, who was a member, tells us that, “It was pleasant, a little too sober

and literary . . . but one met Rich, Ward, and Valentia, and other pleasant or known people ; it was on the whole, a decent resource on a rainy day, in a dearth of parties or Parliament, or in an empty season." In a letter to Lord Blessington, however, Byron spoke of the Alfred as the most *recherché* and most tiresome of any London Club. Sir William Fraser says the Alfred was the first club he joined and calls it "a sort of minor Athenæum." Some wag, believed to be Canning, changed the appellation from Alfred to "Half-read." It was said that Canning when at the pinnacle of his fame dropped in by accident when the house dinner was in progress, made himself remarkably agreeable, but left again without being recognised. Lord Alvanley was at one time a member and said once at White's : "I stood it (the Alfred) as long as I could, but when the seventeenth bishop was proposed I gave in ; I really could not enter the place without being put in mind of my catechism." It may be added that the bishops are reported to have taken their names off the list when a billiard-table was introduced into the club. In later years the Alfred languished and after having offered to coalesce with the Oriental was finally dissolved in 1855.

The Travellers, originally started in 1814, was one of the earliest of its class. It was planned by Lord Castlereagh to serve as a resort for gentlemen who had resided or travelled abroad, and at the same

time to offer hospitality to foreigners temporarily in this country. The qualification was to the effect that candidates must have "travelled out of the British Isles to a distance of at least five hundred miles from London in a straight line," and the rule still stands, although it is not rigorously enforced in our days. The present house, which was designed by Barry, R.A., and built in 1832, is a beautiful building, although dwarfed by its two neighbours on either side, the Athenæum and the Reform. The architecture is Italian and the model is that of a Roman palace. It is quadrangular within, with an open area in the centre, so that all rooms are well lighted. The Pall Mall front has a bold and rich cornice with Corinthian pilasters; the garden front varies in the windows, and is esteemed as a most striking and graceful composition; the roof is of Italian tiles.

This club is one of the best, socially, in London, and admission is much sought after. It was the favourite club of the late Duke of Cambridge, who often dined there quietly and alone. In its infancy the Travellers' was not too prosperous, and occupied a rather shabby house on the north side of Pall Mall, with dark low rooms. But even then, although the accommodation was indifferent, the company was excellent, and the members used to say they enjoyed themselves more in the old than in their smart new house. Very high points were played at whist in

the Travellers', but no cards might be brought out before dinner. The high reputation of the club was not universal. A story is told of a club porter in a house lying to the west of the Travellers' in Pall Mall, who, when asked for it by a caller, airily replied that he knew nothing of any clubs to the east of his own. There is a small club known as the Travellers' in Paris, chiefly composed of English members.

The oldest Service club in England and probably in the world was the Royal Navy, which appears to have been started in 1674, when Admiral Sir John Kempthorne became the first steward of the institution. It was renewed in 1765 and again in 1785 to be amalgamated in 1889 in the club which exists to this day, and regularly celebrates its meeting by dining together at Willis' Rooms. The club was organised on the plan of the convivial clubs of early days, but was limited exclusively to naval officers. At one time the Royal Naval Club held its meetings at the Thatched House, in the large club-room facing St. James' Street, on which the portraits of the Dilettante Club hung, illuminated by wax candles in fine old glass chandeliers. The names of most of our famous admirals and others have been borne on its list of members. Boscawen, Rodney, and later Nelson and Sir Philip Durham belonged to it, while William IV., when Duke of Clarence, who had an unfailing affection for his old Service, was constantly to be seen there.

The first club for the Services combined, and hence called the United Service Club, was founded by that famous old Scotch hero, Sir Thomas Graham, who afterwards became Lord Lynedoch. His personal history can hardly be forgotten ; how on the death of his beautiful young wife, whose memory is still preserved to us in the inimitable portrait by Gainsborough, moved by the strong military spirit which brought him to such high fame, he raised a regiment, the Lanarkshire Volunteers, afterwards the 90th Light Infantry and now known as the 2nd Battalion Scottish Rifles. Sir Thomas Graham was a born soldier, who came straight into the Service as Lieutenant-Colonel at the advanced age of fifty, after which he gained much distinction in Egypt and the Peninsula. He founded the club, in conjunction with Viscount Hill and other officers, on May 31, 1815. It was then named the General Military Club, and having been opened to naval officers also in January the following year, the title of the United Service Club was adopted on December 16, 1816. It was at that time open only to officers of field rank, as Major in the Army and the corresponding rank of Commander in the Navy. The club first had its home in Charles Street, St. James', but ten years later the site of the Club House in Pall Mall was obtained on a ninety years' lease from the Crown, and the old house was sold as it stood to the

new Junior United Service Club for £17,442. The cost of the new building in Pall Mall and its furnishing was £49,743 ; it was designed by Nash, the famous architect, and opened to members in November 1828. A further extension was made in 1858-9, by the acquisition of the lease of the site adjoining, and a sum of £34,000 was spent in connecting it with the original premises and adapting it to the requirements of the club. The outlay had been serious from first to last, but in 1852 original debentures were issued to cover the cost of the extension, and other indebtedness was incurred which may by this time have been extinguished. A lease renewal fund was wisely instituted in 1894 by a levy upon members of five shillings per head, and it has now reached the sum of £7,293 3s. od. which total is speedily increasing by the appropriation to it of all sums received for entrance and annual subscription in excess of £15,500 a year. Further financial negotiations became necessary in 1904 to secure a fresh lease from the Crown through the Woods and Forests.¹

The Junior United Service Club, which was founded in 1827, was the second of the great Service clubs in England. It was intended to meet the needs of officers of lesser rank than that insisted upon in the Senior Club, the United Service. The limitation of rank led to a proposal for the new

¹ See post, p. 286.

club, and the matter was laid before the Head Quarter Staff and the Duke of Wellington, at that time Commander-in-Chief, who approved of the project, and became one of the first patrons of the club. The Lisbon Hotel in Dover Street was occupied as temporary premises, with a constituency of some six hundred members, but on June 20, 1828, the club house just then vacated by the Senior was purchased by the Junior, and upon that same site the present imposing buildings were subsequently erected in 1856, from plans of Messrs. Nelson and James.

Two other Service Clubs now flourish with robust vitality, the Army and Navy and Naval and Military, but both of these were considerably later in their formation; the first in 1839 and the second not before 1862, and they will appear in their chronological order on another page. It may, however, be mentioned here that the Senior and Junior United Service, with the Army and Navy, or "Rag," have long been distinctively known by the three nicknames of "Cripplegate" "Billingsgate" and "Hell-gate." The United Service got its appellation from the supposed advanced years and infirmity of its members, a peculiarity which has long since disappeared, for now the club takes in officers of all ranks and the average age of its members runs the lowest of the three. The day is long past since the hall porter fiercely pursued, with a view to summary

ejection, a young Commander of the Navy, who, owing to the rapidity of modern promotion, had gained admittance prematurely as it seemed to the old official, and was young enough to run upstairs. The second sobriquet was given the Junior United Service on account of its supposed addiction to strong language. Its members were asserted to be the direct descendants of that famous army which "swore in Flanders." The third club was said at one period of its long and honourable record to be rather given to high play, and the character was supposed to have led the Duke of Cambridge to threaten to resign. Probably an apocryphal story ; at least, the threat was never carried into effect.

A club of ancient origin, which became more famous in after-life and still holds a foremost place, is the Union in Trafalgar Square. It came into existence in the early part of 1805 and was on the point of being named the Cumberland, as its first meetings were held in a house of that name. The exact basis on which it was formed is uncertain, but from the name chosen it was clearly intended to represent many sections of the community, and was neither ultra-fashionable nor purely political, but included men of rank and means, members of both services, of the liberal professions and the higher mercantile and commercial classes. On the first committee figure the names of Lords Headfort and Roden, General Ormesby and Mr. John Spencer

Smith, a partner in the great bank of Smith, Payne & Co. The club when formed was proprietary, and the first master was Raggett, no doubt the same George Raggett who became the manager of White's about this time, and ran a small club in St. James' Square, the Roxburgh, identical probably with the Roxburgh dinner club organised by the Rev. T. Frogna Dibden, the bibliophile. Raggett and his descendants were associated with White's till quite a recent date.

Raggett opened the Union Club on February 3, 1807,¹ with two hundred and fifty members, paying a subscription of ten guineas per annum and another guinea for servants. It began in a house in Pall Mall, which in later years was part of the War Office, before it moved into the new and imposing edifice in Whitehall, opposite the old Horse Guards (1906). Later its members lodged in the residence of the Duke of Leeds, in St. James' Square, which subsequently became the Bishop of Winchester's, and did not greatly prosper. Raggett was for throwing up his contract in 1812 (about the time he took over White's); but to help out his profits an increase of fifty members was added to the establishment of the club.² The list now showed a number of notable people had joined—two royal dukes, York and Sussex, the Dukes of Devonshire and

¹ I have seen the date recorded as 1804.

² Serjeant Ballantine's "Memoirs," ii. 68.

Richmond and Argyll, the Marquis of Hertford and Marquis Wellesley, Lords Granville, Peterborough, Stair, and Byron. There was a Baring and a Hoare representing the two great banks, Sir Jonah Barrington, the Irish judge, whose "Reminiscences" still claim their readers, Mr. Quintin Dick, and Mr. Labouchere.

In 1821 the Union Club, which was deceased, was resuscitated and passed into another stage of existence. It ceased to be proprietary and, so to speak, owned itself, being the first club to adopt a principle which is now very generally followed. A small committee of five was appointed to secure a site and build premises in which the members could run their own club. Sir Robert Peel, Lords Gage and Lowther, Pascoe Grenfell, and George Hammersley were appointed with full powers, and acquired the ground at the south-west corner of Trafalgar Square, on which the handsome house erected by Sir Robert Smirke, R.A., now stands. The bay window looking into Cockspur Street became, in its way, as famous as that of White's at the top of St. James' Street. The constituency of the new club was much the same as that of the old; a mixture of the cultured classes. Although at first representatives of the Bench and Bar were not prominent on the list, it became "a resort of wealthy citizens, who just fetch Charing Cross to inhale the fresh air as it is drawn from

the park through the funnel of Berkeley House out of Spring Gardens."

When Serjeant Ballantine joined the club, in 1852, there were many leading lights of the law ; Jervis, afterwards Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, Mr. Justice Maule, Lord Justice Knight Bruce, Selwyn, Byles, Sir Frederick Slade, Sir John Bayly, and Sir Thomas Henry, the principal magistrate. Charles Dickens was put up for election to the club, but died on the very day on which he was to have been balloted for.

The Union Club from the first was famed for its cuisine, and shared its popularity with the Union Hotel next door, which opened about the same time, and enjoyed a high reputation, especially for turtle soup. Lord Panmure made this hotel his headquarters so that he might revel in the turtle.

James Smith of the "Rejected Addresses" was a member of the Union, and describes the club as chiefly composed of merchants, lawyers, Members of Parliament, and gentlemen at large. The bay window, he says, was much frequented by idlers and gossips, who discussed the passers-by, and spent the afternoon in talking politics or scandal. The room was deserted by 6 p.m. and the dining-room filled, when the diners did justice to haunch of mutton and apple tart, after which an adjournment was made to the fine smoking-room, much as we do to-day.

Indian officers, civil and military, returning home on furlough during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, had no regular house of call. Although several so-called clubs existed, such as the Calcutta Club, the Madras Club, the Bombay Club, and the China Club, none of them were more than news-rooms, where light refreshments could be obtained. When Major-General Sir John Malcolm came home for good in 1822, at the end of a distinguished Indian career, he found himself one of the many comrades whose active service was over with no common ground on which to meet and discuss the eventful past. They were not eligible for the United Service Club, for which, as has been said, only field officers of the King's army, and naval officers of corresponding rank were taken ; the Guards' Club, dating from 1813, was essentially a closed borough, and the famous old clubs, White's and the rest, were still fashionable and somewhat beyond their means. The Travellers', the Union, and University had their own constituencies. Malcolm decided to fill the gap, and called together a number of colleagues and friends, and thus the formation of an Oriental Club was arrived at. The meeting was held in the rooms of the Royal Asiatic Society in 14 Grafton Street, and a prospectus issued setting forth the aims and objects of the new association. It was to give persons who had long been resident abroad a common

ground for renewing acquaintance with old friends and fellow-workers, and forming fresh relations with other congenial friends at home; to keep up an interest in our Eastern possessions and diffuse knowledge of the races we ruled.

This prospectus was signed by a long list of notable names which may be read on the original document, still preserved in the drawing-room of the club in Hanover Square. The list comprises most of the men who had helped to win India, to govern and administer it down to the date of the inception of the club. Great soldiers and civilians, distinguished diplomatists, foremost politicians, the Directors of the East India Company, and members generally of the famous families that had made their mark in the annals of British India. At the head of all was the hero of Assaye and the conqueror of Tippoo Sahib, Arthur Duke of Wellington, and the first chairman was Sir John Malcolm, one of the most popular men in London society at the time, and a noted conversationalist. He talked so much indeed, that he had been nicknamed "Bahawder Jaw," it was said, by Canning. There were ten Malcolm brothers, two of them Admirals, who were knighted, as was a fourth. They seem to have all possessed the same characteristic, for when Sir John assured Lord Wellesley that he and his three brothers had once met together in India, the Governor-General declared it to be

“ Impossible ; quite impossible ! ” Malcolm reiterated his statement. “ I repeat it is impossible ; if four Malcolms had come together, we should have heard the noise all over India.”

Among naval officers were Vice-Admiral Sir Henry Blackwood, who was captain of H.M.S. *Euryalus* at Trafalgar, and naval commander on the Indian Station in 1819 ; Sir Philip Durham, the only surviving officer of the *Royal George* ; Lord Exmouth, who bombarded Algiers ; Vice-Admiral Sir Richard King ; Major Basil Jackson, the associate of Sir Hudson Lowe at St. Helena ; Lieutenant Waghorn, the pioneer of the overland route ; Captain John Elphinstone, the famous commander of an East Indiaman ; of distinguished soldiers there were, Sir Archibald Campbell, who was with Wellesley at the capture of Seringapatam, and Sir Colin Campbell, who had two horses shot under him at Assaye ; Sir A. Clarke ; Sir De Lacy Evans, who lived to command a division in the Crimea ; Sir Colquhoun Grant ; Sir Thomas Hislop, who served in the great siege of Gibraltar under Lord Heathcote ; Sir Miles Nightingale ; Sir George Nugent ; Sir Samuel Whittingham ; Sir James Rivett Carnac ; Lord Elphinstone ; Macnaughton ; Laurences—their name is legion.

The first home of the Oriental Club was fixed in 16 Lower Grosvenor Street, and the house was opened to members on July 8, 1824. The premises

are now occupied by Messrs. Collard & Collard, of pianoforte fame. It is historically accurate that the owner of No. 16, when vacating the house to admit the club, sold a part of its furniture and effects to a certain Mr. Joseph Sedley, the pseudo collector of Boggle Wallah, to be immortalised by Thackeray. It is recorded in “*Vanity Fair*” that Joe Sedley “purchased the carpet, costly mirrors, and handsome, appropriately planned furniture by Seddons,” who was a dealer and had intended to start a furniture shop in No. 16, but found that he was owed so much money by customers of the highest rank that he was unable to carry out his idea.

The club was started well ; the rental per annum for the ground floor only was £1200 ; the staff of servants numbered nine men and eight females, and the first steward was a Mr. Pottanco, who had long been employed by Sir John Malcolm, probably in the East, for the name has a strong flavour of “*chi-chi*” or Portuguese. A cellar was commenced by laying down a couple of pipes of Madeira, bought at the island, but shipped to England *via* India, so as to ripen according to the old custom on the sea voyage. Each pipe when landed, with all charges and dues paid, cost £98. The club was well mounted and provided with ample appliances in the way of plate, glass, cutlery, linen, china, lamps, and kitchen utensils, at a total expenditure of £3000. Members presented books and pictures, and one, Sir Charles

Forbes, attended to creature comforts by sometimes sending in a fine turtle.

The Oriental rapidly grew and prospered, and as its members increased to 928, of whom 630 were constantly in England using the club, it became an urgent necessity to improve the club premises. A search was made for a site somewhere between Cavendish Square and Grosvenor Square to the East and West, with the result that the house, No. 18 Hanover Square, on which the club now stands, was acquired, and a new building designed by Mr. Benjamin Dean Wyatt. The erection was at first limited to two floors; on the ground floor were the coffee-room and library, on the first floor the drawing-room and billiard-rooms. Later a third floor was added and, as at the Athenæum, does not add greatly to the architectural beauties of the house.

The Oriental continued to prosper as the favourite resort of old Indians, and the most famous men of the day who had gained laurels in the East regularly joined it. Sir Charles Metcalfe was an original member, and the club entertained him when he was first able to set foot in it in 1839. Generals Sir William Nott and Sir Robert Sale were admitted as honorary members after the Afghan War, and so was the Prussian prince, Waldemar, who had volunteered to serve with our army of the Sutlej. A no less eminent, although apocryphal, personage

had his origin in the Oriental. Beyond doubt Thackeray drew his inimitable Colonel Newcome from one or more types of the Indian officers who belonged to the club. One was Major Carmichael Smith, of whom Mrs. Ritchie, Thackeray's daughter, writes, "he had many of Colonel Newcome's characteristics"; another brother, Major-General Carmichael Smith, was supposed to be very like him, but Sir William Hunter fixes the paternity of the character upon Colonel John Dowdeswell Shakespeare. Mr. A. F. Baillie¹ discusses this point at some length, and quotes from a letter addressed to him by Mr. David Freemantle Carmichael, nephew to the officer of that name above mentioned.

"When 'The Newcomes' was coming out I said to Thackeray, 'I see where you got your Colonel.' 'To be sure you would,' he replied, 'only I had to Anglicise the old boy a little.' "

The likeness to Colonel Newcome in General Carmichael Smith was borne out by old members who remember that, like the dear old "Codd Colonel," he wore moustaches, a very uncommon facial adornment of those days.

The club at one time fell upon evil days, and its very existence was threatened by the malversation of its secretary, who had served it from its foundation, but who was also connected with a print-selling business which failed. The secretary to cover its

¹ "The Oriental Club and Hanover Square," pp. 72 *sqq.*

losses embezzled the funds of the club as fraudulent bailee, leaving the tradesmen's bills unpaid to the amount of £3,500. In this crisis a number of liberal-minded members came to the assistance of the club, and by compounding their future annual subscription provided a sufficient sum in cash to pay off the indebtedness, but the resultant loss of income could only be met by a call upon the members, who more or less grudgingly answered to the whip. Strict economy was practised in the management of the club ; the gratis supply of snuff was discontinued, the staff of servants was cut down, and to increase the income a new regulation admitted officers on sick leave from India to become honorary members on payment of the entrance fee (£21) and the annual subscription of £9. In those days the Oriental contained a large military element and the number of officers as members only began to fall off on the formation of the East India United Service Club in St. James' Square in 1847. As this last named did not immediately do well there was some talk of an amalgamation with the Oriental, but it came to nothing. As time passed the competition for members led the Oriental to remove the restriction on candidature, and the qualification of having served in, or been connected with, India, hitherto insisted upon, was removed. The proposer and seconder were called upon merely to state their candidate's rank, profession, and education. It was

about the same date, 1885, that the moribund Alfred Club in Albemarle Street offered to coalesce with the Oriental, and they were taken in without entrance fee, on condition of paying the same annual subscription. Some four hundred members were thus added to the list, but the Alfred men mostly passed on to the Athenæum and other clubs for which they were candidates.

CHAPTER V

OTHER CLUBS—continued

THE ATHENÆUM—THE GARRICK

THE principal promoter of the Athenæum Club is said to have been John Wilson Croker when Secretary of the Admiralty. He wanted a home for men distinguished in literature, science, and the arts. There was no house exactly of the sort in existence then in London. A preliminary meeting was convened in 1824 in the apartments of the Royal Society in Somerset House, and it was attended by Sir Humphry Davy, Sir Thomas Laurence, Sir Walter Scott, and Tom Moore, while Professor Faraday acted as secretary. A letter is extant from the then Lord Lansdowne in reply to Moore consenting to join, “if Croker will keep the club select, lest it should be overrun with pretenders, than whom there is nowhere a more odious race.” The name of the club was to have been the Society, but it was soon changed to the Athenæum. The first premises occupied were the Clarence club-house, but the present building was erected from the plans of Decimus Burton and opened to members in 1830.

The architecture is Grecian, the frieze an exact facsimile of that of the Parthenon, the most admired marble ornamentation in the world. It was of this that the squib was written satirising Mr. Croker, who ruled matters with rather a high hand :

I'm John Wilson Croker,
I do as I please ;
They ask for an ice house
And I give them a frieze.

A handsome colossal bust of Minerva, in plaster, surmounts the entrance, which is built on a portion of the courtyard of the old Carlton House. When gaslighting was adopted it was suggested that, to instal it artistically, the advice should be sought of Sir Francis Chantrey and Sir Alexander Callcott, and the plan tried of surrounding the Minerva statue with a row of gas jets. The effect of this was to jeopardise the statue, which blistered and became red hot, and promised to be soon splintered and fused, more especially, as to render it water-tight, the statue had been coated with wax.

The Athenæum was inaugurated with some *éclat*. Sir Charles Lyell in February 1830 wrote to his sister : "I wish you had been in time for the opening of our new club. We had a fortnight of gay soirées for the ladies from 9 p.m. to midnight, and they are likely to continue for some months. The place indeed is fitted up in a style that would be ridiculous except to receive ladies. Great fun

has been made of it in verses innumerable—members grumble at the invasion, and retreat into the library, which was respected at first, but the ladies now fill it too, as well as the newspaper-room, which they examine with as much curiosity as we should pry into a harem. They say it is good to be a bachelor, and complain that it keeps married men from home. Ladies soon will have a club of their own.” A forecast to be fully verified in these later days. The house is much admired and the number of candidates is much increased.

The character of the constituency has been studiously maintained at the high level on which it started. The judicious rule that empowers the committee to bring in eminent persons by special election has promoted this, and the club has always included the fine flower of London society, clerical, political, scientific, literary, and artistic. Cabinet ministers, great ecclesiastics, leaders in the law, royal academicians, historians, novelists, inventors, prominent soldiers and sailors are cordially invited and proud to accept membership. Indeed, those admitted to the inner penetralia of the club may rub shoulders with the men who make history and leave their mark upon the age. It has been calculated, in this regard, that sixty-nine members of the Athenæum have been buried in Westminster Abbey and thirty-two in St. Paul’s. How far the ministers of the day frequented it is seen in the custom of one

Cabinet (that of 1836), which had a weekly dinner in the club on Wednesdays. The bill of fare was always supposed to include a Cabinet pudding, and it is said that on the last occasion when the members of an ex-Government met, after it had fallen, the same pudding was ordered, but it was to be made without plums. The predominance of bishops in a measure still obtains, but they are perhaps not so numerous as when the club was styled Bishopsgate. Abraham Hayward once remarked that, “Bishops are beginning to swarm; the atmosphere is full of them, and I expect every moment to see one drop into my soup.” Yet the great ecclesiastics were not all very liberal or tolerant, for when Bishop Colenso visited England his admission to the Athenæum as an honorary member was violently opposed by other bishops.

The annals of the club are rich in memories of famous people. Sydney Smith was very fond of the Athenæum and an extremely popular member. He loved London, and was happier there than in the country, where, as he once said, when a Yorkshire parson, “He was nine miles from a lemon.” And on revisiting town after a long absence he cried: “Those blessed gas-lamps!” A story is preserved of him in the Athenæum, that he was one day talking to the Bishop of London, and the conversation turned upon two members, one unusually taciturn and the other not less loquacious. “I

never shall feel satisfied," said Sydney Smith, "until a marriage is brought about between the son of L. the silent member, and the daughter of D. the garrulous ; the children should hit off a proper medium ; but I doubt if the wedding could ever be solemnised, as D. would be quite unable to hold his tongue and would certainly interrupt the ceremony." Members of great eminence and assured social standing were Cardinal Manning, Carlyle, Richard Burton, Nassau Senior, Sir H. Drummond Wolfe, Sir E. Hamley, Landseer, Darwin, Sir Benjamin Brodie, Charles Greville, Frank Buckland, Lord Leighton, Laurence Oliphant, Chinery, the Editor of *The Times*, and Sir Henry Rawlinson. But the list is practically endless.

One snug corner in a smaller library is still known as Lord Macaulay's corner, where a great part of the "History" was written. Thackeray in later years made the Athenæum his constant home for hours together ; it was a special boast with the author of "Vanity Fair" that he stood the trying test of the ballot-box and was not admitted under Rule 2, which empowers the committee to bring in, specially, a yearly number of distinguished persons as members direct. It was at the Athenæum that Anthony Trollope decided, after leaving two clergymen discussing the character of Mrs. Proudie, the Bishop's wife, one of the truest types immortalised by him, that the world had had enough

of her, and said : "I'll go home and kill her." The novelist's irresponsible power over life and limb has often been shown, and the most famous case is that of Thackeray's summary disposal of George Osborne, whom he had shot at Waterloo, much to his own satisfaction in "getting rid of such a scoundrel." Further back in date Theodore Hook came much to the club. He had a favourite table in the dining-room, that in the north-east corner just inside the swing doors, and when he had finished his meal of broiled bones, or a well-cayenned chop, a select circle would gather round him to listen to his ceaseless flow of witty conversation. The rendezvous came in time to be named "Temperance Corner," on the *lucus a non* principle, for the fluids consumed were not really what the Americans call "soft drinks," but of stronger quality, only christened euphemistically "toast and water" or "lemonade." Hook himself seems to have resented the intrusion on his privacy, if we are to believe his veiled protests in some of his novels, and his feelings towards some of his fellow-members are preserved in the distich of his own composition in which he complained that he was—

Over-worked, over-hurried,
Over-Croker'd, over-Murray'd.

At least he was useful in his generation, for after his disappearance from the club the coffee-room

receipts fell off by £300 a year. The place which was Hook's came afterwards to be constantly occupied by Hayward, the famous essayist and critic, and was generally known as "Hayward's Heath," or "Abraham's bosom."

Kinglake, the historian, lived almost entirely at the club, growing as time passed more and more aged and infirm, and especially more deaf. Hamley was heard to say : "When I talked to him, everybody in the room heard, except Kinglake." Kinglake, like many deaf men, was given to shout in people's ears, and on one occasion was heard addressing Thackeray at the top of his voice : "Come and sit down ; I have something very private to tell you, no one must hear it but you." The story is akin to that of the distinguished soldier, equally afflicted, who selected the smoking-room of his club for a confidential conversation with one of his staff, putting momentous questions and expecting answers, which were given in such a loud key that the members became possessed of some portentous secrets, and there was generally a large audience collected in the room.

The Athenæum has never made boast of a very *recherché* cuisine. It was not called a "dining club" by its most fastidious members, but "a place where one can dine." The average prices of the various meals are moderate, one shilling and one shilling and sixpence paid for breakfast or luncheon, respec-

tively, four shillings for dinner. A feature in the feeding was the "Asiatic Sunday," as some one styled it, when curry and rice always appeared on the bill of fare. Another popular dinner was that which provided marrow bones and jam roly-poly puddings. Once Sir Edwin Landseer condemned a beefsteak : "They say there's nothing like leather ; this beefsteak is." A boar's head on the sideboard was happily described by a witty member as the head of a decapitated member. Bores were plentiful at the Athenæum according to Theodore Hook, who wrote :

A. and B. are awful bores,
And C. and D. are worser,
But a greater bore than all
Is that infernal purser.

Meaning a naval officer, who never tired of repeating dreary stories of service afloat.

The club was too high-toned to encourage the use of gin in the smoking-room. A member, Captain F., who called for a glass of gin-and-water, was told there was no gin in the club. When he indignantly remonstrated the committee yielded, but ordered only one bottle, which was kept in the cellarette and labelled "Captain F.'s bottle of gin."

Perhaps one of the most notable men in his time at the Athenæum was Lawrence Oliphant, and his extraordinary power of ingratiating himself with

and winning over others was often exhibited there. It is said of him that he once helped Lord Beaconsfield to put on his coat and, although comparative strangers till then, they were soon seen walking down Pall Mall arm in arm, and soon after this Oliphant had a letter inviting him to stay at Hughenden. It is further said that he met Lord Salisbury with the same results. He was asked to Hatfield, and there made the acquaintance of the Prince of Wales, and an invitation to Sandringham followed.

The Athenæum has never admitted actors very freely, and at this present moment the list includes but few representatives of the dramatic art. But in times past Charles Mathews the elder, Macready, Charles Mayne Young, Charles Kemble, Charles Keen, and Daniel Terry were among the number. Sir Henry Irving was also gladly welcomed to the club.

One noted individual and great theologian certainly never belonged to the Athenæum, although the fact was not clearly understood by the librarian. Some one asked him, "Is Justin Martyr in?" and the prompt reply was, "I do not think the gentleman is a member of the club, but I will see."

The Garrick Club was instituted in 1831, with the avowed purpose of "bringing together the patrons of the drama and its professors, and to offer literary men a rendezvous." It owed its birth very largely to the exertions of Mr. Frank Mills and

Mr. Henry Broadwood, and was first established at 35 King Street, Covent Garden, within a stone's throw of the "Market." The neighbourhood was at one time most fashionable; all manner of notabilities lived in it, people of rank, wits, and men of genius, artists of eminence and famous litterateurs. The Garrick was always especially favoured by actors, and its varied dramatic associations marked it as peculiarly suitable for the home of a club bearing the name of one of our most illustrious lights of the stage. The intention of the founders was to provide a house run on less formal lines than the clubs further westwards, where, as it was wittily remarked, it was "as much as a man's life was worth to ask a stranger to poke the fire." The Garrick was intended to be more sociable; at one time every one knew every one else by right of common membership and without introduction; it was to be inexpensive, although not neglecting creature comforts; but designed more for pleasant commerce and conversation, than excelling in the display of the culinary art.

One of the original members, who served for many years on the committee, was the Rev. Richard Barham, the world-renowned author of the "Ingoldsby Legends." He wrote also a strange account of many of his fellow-members, which was privately printed long afterwards, and of which more directly, and he composed an ode to celebrate

the first anniversary of the new club, which may fitly precede some account of the Garrick :

Let poets of superior parts,
 Consign to deathless fame
 The larceny of the Knave of Hearts,
 Who robbed his royal dame.
 The honest Muse
 Such themes eschews,
 Disdains all knavish clubs,
 And hails to-day
 With joyous lay,
 Thy birth, fair Queen of Clubs.
 Salve Regina,
 Esto perpetua,
 Hail ! Hail ! Hail !
 Illustrious Queen of Clubs.

It was said of Canon Barham, that “he was learned with Bishop Copleston, humorous with Sydney Smith, jocular with Theodore Hook, facetious with Canon of the Chapel Royal, and genial and conciliatory with all with whom he was associated. . . . He was not, indeed, more remarkable for his literary talent than estimable for his unruffled kindness, friendly benevolence, and love of harmony and peace.¹

Yet he could be a caustic critic, and the notes he left in manuscript, of some of the earlier members of the Garrick, show that he was a keen judge of character and quick to detect the foibles and failings of others. The work after his death was hugged close by his family, who may have wished that it

¹ JERDAN, “Men I have known.”

should not be printed and yet did not destroy it. Somehow it found its way across the Atlantic and was privately printed in New York, when only two hundred and forty copies were struck off. One of them is in the library of the British Museum, and some extracts from it will serve to convey an idea of the social life of the time, between 1830 and 1840 that is to say.

There are 135 members mentioned, all more or less prominent people. John Adolphus, barrister-at-law, was one of the founders of the club ; "full of anecdote, very rude at times . . . and extremely unpopular" ; he wrote a continuation of Hume and Smollett's "History of England," "a book of indifferent pretensions," says Barham. Of a certain baronet he spoke as "a regular scamp. A simple line captain. He was always in low water, an actor on the Margate stage, and spent all he was worth. One day, when dining off bread and cheese and ale, he suddenly learnt of a great stroke of fortune through the death of his cousin and his succession to the title and estates." He came into an income of several thousands and ran through all his property in a couple of years, then raised £40,000 and absconded with the money, for which he was outlawed and struck off the list of the club." Another member stirred Barham to deep bitterness. "He, I. F., was a low scribbler, without an atom of talent, and totally unused to the society

of gentlemen ; of drunken habits and an offender against club etiquette, for he published an account of a private dinner given with the walls, and narrowly escaped expulsion." Later, as we shall presently hear, a writer of world-wide repute took offence at the indiscretion of a younger member, and there was a bitter quarrel which dragged in many people.

The mixed constituency of the club is shown in the names dealt with by Barham. Great peers and others of lesser note are described—to wit, the Marquis of Anglesea, who lost his leg at Waterloo ; Earl Beauchamp, Lord Albert, afterwards Marquis, Coningham ; Lord Greaves, commonly called "Tommy Tombstones" ; Lord William Lennox ; the Earl of Coventry, long known as Lord Deerhurst ; the Marquis of Douro, who lived far into the nineteenth century as the second duke of Wellington ; and Viscount Allen, the penniless Irish peer, nicknamed 'Cantankerous Allen' from the twist in his temper" (Barham). With these may be classed Lords Mulgrave, Clanricarde, Worcester, Chesterfield, Castlereagh, and Lord Adolphus Fitz-Clarence, who supported H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex when he presided at the inaugural banquet. There were peers whose titles were not of honour, such as the wretched Lord de Ros, whose disgrace at the card table is told elsewhere ;¹ baronets,

¹ See post, "Play at Clubs."

Sir Jacob Astley and Sir Harry Gooderich ; famous actors and actor-managers, among the first T. P. Cooke, once a lieutenant, R.N., the first actor of sailors' parts, Tyrone Power, the inimitable stage Irishman, the two Mathewses, father and son, Kemble, the brother of Charles and Fanny, George Coleman's successor as licenser of plays, Major Dawkins, who, "Slip" Price of Drury Lane said, was "the only amateur worth anything and he would not command thirty shillings a week," and John Harley, "who began as a second buffoon at Canterbury, but amassed a handsome fortune."

Among the rest were Sam Arnold, known as "Sambo," whose theatre was burnt down, uninsured, by which he lost £60,000 and "bore his ill luck well." Arnold afterwards ran his new house against Covent Garden, managed by Osbaldeston, and the two in their competition reduced their boxes to four-pence and twopence each ; there were popular playwrights like Sheridan Knowles and Poole, the author of "Paul Pry" ; Sir George Smart, the composer, and Planché, the inventor of the modern extravaganza ; publishers, members of the best-known firms, Longman, John Murray, Richard Bentley, partners and successors of Colburn, and Spottiswoode, the King's printer ; fine artists, like George Clint and Cattermole ; gallant soldiers, Major-General Sir Alexander Barnard and Captain Gronow of the "Reminiscences," the noted duellist, who called

out the Duke of Wellington, and Colonel Burdett, eldest son of Sir Henry Burdett, an officer of the 10th Hussars, one of the "elegant extracts" who were removed into other regiments for combining to cut their colonel, St. Quentin; many members of less pretensions, but greatly esteemed within the club; Francis Fladgate, whom Barham describes as "one of the most polished gentlemen and good-natured persons I ever met; he inherited £60,000 from his father, an attorney in Essex Street, but became much impoverished, he was so generous and so easily duped by the designing." Durrant was a stockbroker member, who made a large fortune during the long war by "bulling" and "bearing." Another, Derby, was a man who could not be five minutes in the club without talking about as many lords"; George Robins, "of auction renown," was a well-known member, and Samuel Cartwright, "the dentist of Burlington Street, who gave the best dinners in London." The Sheridans, sons of Tom Sheridan, and last but not least, Sam Rogers, the poet, banker, and wit. "Sarcasm and satire were his social weapons; kindness and geniality he did not greatly show; but, if not blest with the best of tempers, he had at bottom a warm heart." In appearance he looked like a Death's Head, and it was Sydney Smith who inscribed on his portrait, so like that of a skeleton, "painted during his life time."

Two very eminent painters who were members of the Garrick are not mentioned by Barham—Clarkson Stanfield and David Roberts, both Royal Academicians, who enriched the new or second club-house with two magnificent pictures.¹ The first was one of the founders, and Roberts joined it within four years.

One of the earliest members and most choice spirits at the Garrick was Tom Hill, who lived to a great age. Having lost a considerable fortune about 1810, he retired to live on the residue in quiet chambers at the Adelphi, where he began to collect, patiently and judiciously, old books, with literary and other rarities, which after his death took a week to sell under the hammer. He was already advanced in years when the Garrick was formed, and his age was a perennial joke in the club. They called him “Old Methusaleh”; James Smith (of the “Rejected Addresses”) declared that the record of his birth was destroyed with the parish registers at the fire of London in 1666. Hook emended this by saying, “Pooh! Pooh!” (a favourite exclamation of Tom Hill’s) “he is one of the little hills mentioned as skipping, in the Psalms.” He kept young by early rising and regular exercise. After he was eighty he rose at five and walked to Billingsgate to buy his breakfast-fish, and attended so carefully to his health that, after an exceptionally

¹ See post, chap. xv. “Art Treasures.”

good dinner, to which he could do ample justice, he put himself upon a regimen of tea and toast, and went to bed at eight o'clock. His longevity was no doubt rightly attributed by his friends to his even and imperturbable temper. He is described as a man who knew everything and everybody, "all that was going forward in all circles—mercantile, political, fashionable, literary, or theatrical ; all matters connected with Naval and Military affairs, agriculture, finance, art, science—everything came alike to him."

The Garrick has gathered within its folds all the notabilities of their generation, from the creation of the club to the present day. Thackeray, whose sensitiveness was so delicate that he brought about the expulsion of Edmund Yates for having offended against the letter of the law of privacy, used the club constantly as a preserve in which he kept his characters, and it was well known at the time he was writing "*Pendennis*" that a fellow-member, Archdeckne, sat for the portrait of Foker and was very proud of it. Thackeray was a sort of social despot in the club, who dominated the talk in the smoking-room and made or marred the prospects of new members. There was one, whose odd figure and peculiar face lent themselves so much to caricature, that Thackeray was for ever sketching them on every piece of blotting pad and stray scrap of paper, and leaving the drawings about the club.

Theodore Hook was fond of the Garrick, and Sydney Smith came there often, as well as his son, known to his death as "Assassin" Smith, not for his murderous tastes, but because he was at one time closely connected with the fortunes of a horse of that name ; he was to be constantly seen glowering from a chair in a corner of the smoking-room. This was the son whom Sydney Smith adjured to be careful in the choice of his conversation with a certain bishop, who was to sit beside him at the dinner table. The "Assassin" could only think to ask his very reverend neighbour if he could form any idea of the time spent in bringing Nebuchadnezzar into training when they took him up from grass.

The first home of the Garrick was in King Street, Covent Garden, a comparatively small house, but very snug and comfortable. Lord William Lennox in his "Reminiscences" describes, "the strangers' dining-room, two rooms thrown into one, on the first floor as commodious ; the smoking-room on the first floor all that could be desired ; two former drawing-rooms formed the dining-room for the members, the shelves of one of them being filled with books, while the walls of every room, hall, or passage, were covered with portraits of well-known actors.¹

When, with increasing numbers, the club outgrew

¹ See post, chap. xv. "Art Treasures."

its first premises the new house was built, in 1884, as now standing in Garrick Street. It was designed by Mr. Marrable, the architect, and is a handsome and commodious building, worthy of its ancient reputation. An addition to its constituency became necessary, and the doors were opened wide to admit men of fashion and admirers of talent, who liked to be associated with the prominent people of the day—officers of the Guards and social celebrities succeeded to the mantle of Tom Hill, Theodore Hook, and Albert Smith, the last named being a constant visitor to the club, to which he often came before the hour of his famous entertainment, “Mont Blanc,” at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly. The small hours are still popular with the members of the modern Garrick, but not so much as when Theodore Hook remained there till long after dawn. He had been told by the doctors, he said, to avoid the night air, so he arrived late in the afternoon, and “never went home till morning.” There was a member of the club who predicted the advent of the millenium at the end of three years. “All right,” cried Hook, “give me a £5 note now, and I will repay you £50 at the millenium.”

The strict rules long prevailing at the Garrick as to the treatment of visitors are nowadays very appreciably relaxed. Outsiders are not restricted to the strangers’ dining-room—the “Aceldama,” or field in which they were buried—but are now admitted

to the club coffee-room, except on one night in the week, and after dinner they may use the morning-room and enter the card-room. A striking feature of to-day is the supper party, to which strangers may be invited and permitted to enter the coffee-room between 10 p.m. and 1 a.m. But the number of occasions on which hospitality may be exercised is limited to five in one year, unless when the host is a relative. There is also a private dining-room, used for luncheon parties, to which ladies may be invited.

The Garrick was, and is, esteemed for its good living. Two famous things are still to be obtained —“Gin punch” and the “Garrick steak.” The recipe of the first is to pour half a pint of gin on the outer peel of a lemon, then to add a little fresh lemon juice, a glass of maraschino, about a pint and a quarter of water, and two bottles of iced soda water, with two pints of punch as the result. The Garrick steak is made by cutting through the sirloin and the flat piece produced contains both the upper and the under cut.

CHAPTER VI

POLITICAL CLUBS, ETC.

THE CARLTON—THE REFORM—THE CONSERVATIVE—THE DEVONSHIRE—THE UNIVERSITY CLUBS—UNITED UNIVERSITY—OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE—MORE ABOUT SERVICE CLUBS—ARMY AND NAVY—NAVAL AND MILITARY—GUARDS’—EAST INDIA UNITED SERVICE—CAVALRY—THE BREAKFAST CLUB.

As the social life in England developed and became more strenuous, various classes and coteries desired to have their own representative clubs, their gathering-places for the discussion and promotion of their own particular interests. Many kinds of clubs accordingly were created in the early part of last century, and have more or less steadily flourished and increased. The principles on which they were founded embrace all concerns and connections in which people are involved. Some have been for the furtherance of political views, some have been devoted to the encouragement of literature and the arts, some have to do with the liberal professions, some with the universities, some with the Army and Navy and Civil Service, of the Crown.

Taking politics first, we find a great extension in the uses and powers of the political clubs. One of the earliest in modern times was the Carlton—

which held its first meeting in Charles Street, St. James', in 1831. Mr. Thomas Raikes, in his delightful diary, records under date April 7, 1832 : “A new Tory club has just been formed, for which Lord Kensington’s house in Carlton Gardens has been taken. Lord Clanwilliam and others having asked me to belong to it, though no party man or political character, I have agreed. The object is purely a Whig reunion ; White’s, which was formerly devoted to the other side, being now of no colour and frequented indiscriminately by all. The Duke takes a great interest in the new establishment.”

The Duke is of course the Duke of Wellington, and he was joined in the enterprise by Sir Robert Peel, their main object being to oppose parliamentary reform. The club held its first meeting in Charles Street, Waterloo Place, then moved to Carlton Gardens, and finally built a house for itself in Pall Mall, the germ of the present handsome edifice, which is the work of Mr. Sydney Smirke and was opened in 1854. This building, one of the architectural ornaments of London, is a copy of Sansovino’s Library of St. Mark’s, Venice, and its principal features are the well-known polished columns of red Peterhead granite, which, despite gloomy predictions, have admirably borne the test of time and exposure.

The constitution of the club was wide, and special

facilities were offered to attract members of the right sort. The establishment is 1140 members, exclusive of peers, peers' eldest sons, and members of the House of Commons, who are eligible for election on the first vacancy that occurs after their first proposal.

The Reform Club was the answer addressed by reforming parties to the Carlton, and it owes its origin to the Hon. Edward Ellice, M.P. The preliminary meetings for its formation were held at his residence, in 14 Carlton House Terrace, early in 1836. After that, on May 5, the same year, the first committee of the Reform Club, all Liberal members of Parliament but four, met at 104 Pall Mall, and they agreed to rent Gwydyr House, Whitehall, from the Woods & Forests, appointing as the trustees of the club, the Duke of Norfolk, Lords Mulgrave and Durham, Edward Ellice, and General Sir R. Ferguson. Gwydyr House was opened to members on May 24, 1836, and occupied until a more suitable house could be erected upon the site secured in Pall Mall, from the designs supplied by Messrs. Blore, Basevi, Cockerell, Sydney Smirke, and Barry. The site was Sir Walter Stirling's house, where the National Gallery was temporarily lodged on the south side of Pall Mall, and the instructions to the architects amounted to *carte blanche* to provide something that would surpass all other clubs in existence. The

style of the building is pure Italian in parts, taken in some respects from the Farnese palace at Rome, which was designed by Michael Angelo and executed by Antonio Sangallo. The exterior combines simplicity with great richness. The chief feature of the interior is a noble hall running up to the top of the building, an Italian cortile surrounded by a colonnade, half Ionic and half Corinthian. The Reform is about the only one of the foremost and historic clubs that offers sleeping accommodation to its members. There are a few private rooms on the top floor, which are in great request always.

The Reform has enjoyed a great reputation for the excellence of its cuisine, its kitchen having been long presided over by that eminent *cordon bleu*, Alexis Soyer, a half-forgotten name nowadays outside the annals of gastronomy. Soyer first came to England on a visit to his brother, who was *chef* to the old Duke of Cambridge, son of George III., and soon after took service with various noblemen until he was appointed *chef* to the Reform Club. He was a man of original character and "composed" dishes with great inventiveness, after the manner of his representative in fiction, the Mirabolant, whom Thackeray brought into "Pendennis" with his fiddle and his dressing-gown and his undying devotion to Blanche Amory, Lady Clavering's *protégée* and disguised daughter. Soyer made the Reform famous by the magnificence of the kitchen he

installed, in which the then novel agents of steam and gas were introduced to run the *batteries de cuisine*. Under his auspices the club gave some famous political banquets, a dinner to O'Connell, another to Ibrahim Pasha, and a third to Lord Palmerston, no mean judge of good cooking. Soyer's fame was so great that he was imported into the social movements of the time. He was sent to Ireland during the great famine, to teach the starving people how to dine on nothing at all, and again, at the worst period of the Crimean winter, it was hoped he might make up by gastronomic conjuring for defective commissariat arrangements. But the most toothsome cookery has never availed much in the dearth of sufficient food.

The Reform numbers 1400, and is always largely patronised by its members, who are fond of collecting together in little coteries, to settle the affairs of the nation ; and much good literary talk is constantly heard in the smoking-room, although the habit of smoking so little obtained in early days, that a smoking-room was omitted from the first architect's plans. It owns and controls a considerable fund for political purposes, but liberal or radical sentiments do not always prevail.

A club started to relieve the Carlton, where candidates abounded and vacancies were often filled by special admission, was the Conservative. Its constitution was precisely similar to that of the

Carlton and the Junior Carlton, which afterwards came into existence for the same reason. The Conservative consists of 1300 members, exclusive of peers, eldest sons of peers, and members of Parliament, who come in on the first opportunity after proposal, as do members in the Carlton when a vacancy occurs. The Conservative is a well-managed club, and the rules and regulations are severely precise, even in minute details. Many restrictions and limitations are imposed upon members. It is forbidden to introduce any food for the use of members, except game or fruit from a member's own hothouse. No table may be reserved in the coffee-room for more than half an hour before sitting down to dinner. No writing materials are allowed upon the coffee-room tables, no servants may leave the coffee-room at meal hours for the members' convenience, to fetch books, papers, or articles from other rooms, or to tell members in other parts of the house that their dinner is ready. The addresses of all members of the club are entered in a book, which is open only to the inspection of the secretary and committee ; no letters addressed only with initials can be received at the club. Yet against all this the club has provided a bicycle shed, a very uncommon convenience in London Clubs. The house is very handsome and very richly decorated ; it has a noble hall with a tesselated floor, the roofs are enriched and the walls

embellished with encaustic tiles. The site occupied is part of that on which the old Thatched House Tavern stood.

Political clubs are very numerous nowadays in London and the large cities of the United Kingdom. The Devonshire in St. James' Street has a wide constituency, which includes many shades of opinion ; Liberals predominate, but modern Liberal Unionists are plentiful, and have included statesmen like the Duke of Devonshire, the Marquis of Lansdowne, the late Earl Spencer, the Earl of Rosebery and Lord James of Hereford. Admission is watched by a close ballot, in which candidature must be vouched for on the personal knowledge of the proposer. No small interest attaches to the house from the fact that it is identical with that built as the notorious "hell" for Mr. Crockford in 1827, where deep play was long the practice, and enormous sums were won and lost. Crockford had been a fishmonger hard by Temple Bar. He began the business of gambling by taking the empty Watier's club-house, in partnership with another, but presently moved into the palatial building, which was built for him and still stands at the top of St. James' Street. To make the place select it was organised as a club and the election of members vested in a committee. Crockford's soon became the rage and everybody joined. The Duke of Wellington was a member, but never played at hazard, the principal game.

The place was magnificently planned and run, a marvel of architecture, built of the most splendid materials, gorgeously decorated with gilding and marble. The outlay on decorations alone was estimated at £94,000. The New Pandemonium, as it was styled, or real "Hell," consisted of four sumptuous drawing-rooms richly embellished with mirrors and silken draperies ; one of them was a "free" restaurant, where exquisite suppers were always on the table, prepared under the superintendence of M. Ude, the most illustrious *chef* of his day. The fare at Crockford's was plentiful and of the highest quality. Theodore Hook applied to the liberal proprietor the Scripture text, "He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away." More about the play at Crockford's will be found in the chapter devoted to club gambling.¹

At Crockford's death (he retired in 1840 with a large fortune) the house was sold by his executors and passed through various phases ; it was the home of one or two ephemeral clubs, and was for a time a great restaurant, the Wellington, but is now more or less permanently occupied by the Devonshire.

Crockford was known in society as the "fishmonger." His shop near Temple Bar was occupied by a succession of fishmongers and its original quaint unpretending aspect was long preserved.

Politics may be said to have inspired the

¹ See post, Chapter xi.

formation of many modern caravanserai, such as the two *Constitutionals* and the *National Liberal Clubs*—vast establishments, which open their doors wide to the supporters of the opposing parties that alternately govern the country, and in the intervals of good cheer crowd to listen to the lectures and addresses of their leaders. Other clubs with large constituencies have been created, such as the *City Carlton* with 1000 members, the *City Liberal*, and the *Scottish Conservative* with Head Quarters in Edinburgh and having a total of 2,250, of whom only 750 are resident.

The *United University Club* was the first formed to minister to the needs of the great crowd constantly issuing from our chief seats of learning, and its house as it still exists in Suffolk Street, Pall Mall East, was designed in 1824 by Messrs. Deering and Wilkes. An essential qualification is to have graduated at Oxford or Cambridge, and among its members are many men of note, who have made their mark in public affairs, at the Bar, or in the Church. It was Mr. Gladstone's favourite club, where he might be seen resting at times over a plain chop with a Homer or book of divinity set up before him to read while he dined. A peculiarity in this club is the extension of its hospitality to members of other clubs, individually, not to the whole house, when it comes to be turned out temporarily for cleaning or repairs.

The Oxford and Cambridge was a club for members of the two universities started in 1830, at a meeting of graduates presided over by Lord Palmerston, at the British Coffee House in Cockspur Street. It began in a hired house in St. James' Square, where it remained till proper premises were built for it in 1836-7, on the Crown property in Pall Mall, where it still stands at a high rental. The architects were the two Smirkes, Sir Robert and his brother, Sydney Smirke. It has an imposing façade on Pall Mall, with very rich ornamental detail and a balcony of worked metal foliage. It owns a fine library, kept fully up-to-date with ample additions yearly. Creature comforts are not neglected ; the cellar at the Oxford and Cambridge is well stocked and maintained, and the cook is a *cordon bleu*. The ordeal of the ballot-box is not severe ; ten must vote, and one black ball in ten is sufficient to exclude a candidate. A third club of this class is the New University, which dates from 1864, with a constituency of 1100, half to each university, Oxford and Cambridge, and owning a pretty modern building high up St. James' Street.

In 1837 the pressure upon the waiting lists of the United Service and Junior United Service Clubs was so great and the hopes of election so small, that a number of officers, headed by Sir Edward Barnes, resolved to establish a new Service club. It was to be called the Army Club, and to be

open to all officers on full or half-pay. The Duke of Wellington, however, when invited to become patron declined to accept the office or become a member, unless Naval officers and officers of the Royal Marines were also made eligible for membership. His Grace's condition was deemed just, and the result was the Army and Navy Club. The Duke became the first patron, Sir Edward Barnes the first President, and the vacancy caused by his death in the first year was filled by Admiral Sir Philip Durham, after whom came the first Duke of Cambridge, and he was succeeded by the late Duke. To-day the post of President has been accepted by Field-Marshal H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, K.G.

The first premises occupied were the house at the corner of King Street and St. James' Square, that numbered 16, which had been recently vacated by another club, the Oxford and Cambridge mentioned above. The Army and Navy remained for some years at No. 16, but when, in 1848, the present freehold premises were in course of erection it was moved into No. 13 St. James' Square, then known as Lichfield House, where the club was housed until the completion of the new building. Several freehold properties were purchased to form the site of the new club. One was No. 20 St. James' Square, owned by the trustees of the Baroness de Mauley, and formerly in the possession of two

peers in succession, the Earl of Wilmington and the Earl of Buckinghamshire. Other properties secured were No. 3 George Street, and four houses in Pall Mall numbering from 36 to 39 inclusive. One of these appears to justify the claim of the club to occupy in part the residence of the celebrated Nell Gwynne. The mirror which hangs in the club over the mantelpiece of the outer smoking-room on the ground floor was found in Lord de Mauley's house. Among the title deeds of the club property is one reciting the gift by King Charles II. in 1677, of pieces or parcels of ground which formed part of a field or close called "Pell Mell field," otherwise "St. James' field." The ground was held in trust for the Earl of St. Albans, his heirs and assigns for ever; this was the son of Nell Gwynne.

The new premises were opened on February 25, 1851. They have a frontage of 80 feet on Pall Mall, and 100 feet in St. James' Square and are 200 feet in depth. The price of the site, together with the excavations, concreting, and so forth, amounted to £52,000; the building which was erected cost £54,000 and furnishing £10,000 more, so that the total outlay on the club-house was £116,000. The architects were Messrs. Parnell and Smith, who adopted as their model the well-known Palazzo Rezzonico, which occupies a prominent position on the Grand Canal

in Venice. A good photograph of this palace hangs in the house dining-room of the club. The builders of the house were Messrs. Trego, Smith & Appleford, and the first stone of the new building was laid on May 13, 1848, by Colonel Daniell of the Coldstream Guards, afterward and for a long period Chairman of the Committee of the club.

It was in the early days of the club, when it was the home of men whose names are fast fading out of memory, that it obtained its universally known sobriquet of the "Rag." Its godfather was the famous "Billy" Duff, who had been a captain in the 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers, and who in his time was both the terror and amusement of London. "Billy" Duff's museum contained a very heterogeneous collection of articles curiously and sportively acquired, from the shirt-pins of his personal friends to the door knockers and area bells of London householders. It is recorded that on one occasion "Billy" Duff entered the club-house late and called for supper. The bill of fare was so meagre that he angrily stigmatised it as a "rag-and-famish affair." The nickname caught on and was quickly known and appreciated as a good joke, both in the club and out of it. Captain Duff was himself so pleased with it that he soon afterwards designed the club button, which was at one time worn by many members of the club in evening dress.

The reasons already given for the formation of the Army and Navy Club, the stagnation of candidates on the waiting list of the other Service Clubs, acted also in bringing the Naval and Military into existence. It began in a small way in 1862 with, for the most part, junior officers, chiefly belonging to the Buffs at that time quartered in the Tower, who joined together and occupied a furnished house in Clifford Street, which was soon outgrown as its vogue increased and many members joined ; they presently moved to 22 Hanover Square, awaiting a still better home. They were mostly the more youthful and promising officers, commonly called “spring captains” in those days, and it long maintained the character of youthfulness which is now becoming a tradition of the past. The subalterns have for the most part, developed into Colonels and Generals ; and candidature, prolonged into ten or a dozen years, is against the election of junior officers.

A special interest attaches to the Naval and Military from the new house it chose. When increasing numbers necessitated another move, Cambridge House in Piccadilly was taken, which must ever be associated with the name of Lord Palmerston, who resided in it for a generation or more, and made it the centre of political action and social festivity. The exterior of the house remains unchanged ; the courtyard at the entrance which has given it the name of the “In and Out” Club,

is as it was when the whole world of London high life drove up to Lady Palmerston's (formerly Countess Cowper's) hospitable doors ; the drawing-room on the first floor is a little changed from the days of her great entertainments, but a complete transformation has been worked below in the ground floor, where the old garden, partly intact, and the old stables have been cleverly adapted for the accommodation of the members. The present coffee-room is perhaps unique in club architecture. It stands apart from the main building and the club escapes the savoury odours that invade others on the old plan. In the Junior Carlton, by the way, the kitchen is at the top of the house and the coffee-room on the first floor.

The future of the Naval and Military Clubs is said to be uncertain. It is held on a lease that must presently expire, and although with commendable prudence a sinking fund has been accumulated to provide means for meeting the inevitable fine on renewal, it may happen that money may not buy the desired extension, and the owner of the house may elect to live in it himself.

Some other Service Clubs merit description. The first of these is the Guards', a club formed to compensate the Brigade for having no regimental messes except when serving outside London.¹ Every

¹ The Household Cavalry regiments have mess-houses in the Knightsbridge and Albany Street Barracks.

officer of the Foot Guards on receiving his commission is entitled to become a member, and is at once enrolled when he announces his intention. If he retires from the Brigade with less than twenty years' service, and is still desirous of continuing a member, he must stand a ballot for re-election. After twenty years he may remain on the list without ballot. The club had its first home in St. James' Street, but the present house in Pall Mall was completed in 1850, and is a remarkably convenient building, being in aspect very much like a private house. By a legitimate fiction the club-house in Pall Mall is deemed to be part and parcel of the Guard houses where a daily Royal Guard is mounted.

The East India United Service Club was constituted in 1849 to take in officers, civil and military, who served the East India Company, and are now employed by the Indian Empire. This category includes viceroys, governors, and lieutenant-governors, bishops, scientists, financiers, and the whole list of officials, in all branches and capacities, who carry on the Government of India. It began in a house, No. 14 St. James' Square, rented and subsequently bought from Lord Clancaricarde. In 1864 the house adjoining, No. 15, was purchased and incorporated in one handsome edifice by the eminent architect Mr. Adam Lee.

A more recent addition to Clubland is the Cavalry Club started in 1895, exclusively for com-

batant officers who have served in the various mounted arms, English and Indian Cavalry, Royal Horse Artillery, and Imperial Yeomanry. It has an establishment of 1,300 and owns a private dining-room, to which ladies are admitted as guests.

A club was started in February 1866 and still flourishes, constantly reinforced and supported by some of the best people that have figured in London life. This is the Breakfast Club, a small gathering, limited to twelve in number, who have regularly met at each other's houses at stated intervals to eat the first meal of the day together. It grew out of a chance meeting at the rooms of Sir James Lacaita, in Piccadilly, opposite Burlington House. The others present were Sir John Acton, Lord Arthur Russell, Mr. Grant Duff, and Sir Frederick Pollock, the Queen's Remembrancer. When the party broke up they agreed to meet again, and there was another breakfast given a couple of days later by Sir Frederick Pollock in Montague Square, when to those above mentioned were added Sir Edmund Head, Sir John Lefevre and Mr. Froude. These seven formed themselves into a Breakfast Club, bound by simple rules and limited to the number above mentioned. The agreement was to breakfast together on Saturdays at 9.30 a.m. and as nearly as possible once a fortnight during the sitting of Parliament. The choice of new members was to be unanimous, and it was

decreed that distinguished foreigners, not resident in London, might be invited to the breakfasts. One of the next to join by invitation was Lord Dufferin, then came Lord Aberdare; after him Sir John Simeon, and the full number of twelve was completed by the election of Sir Thomas Erskine May. By tacit consent it was understood that party politics should be excluded from the conversation. The Parliamentary news was already on hand through Sir John Lefevre and Sir T. Erskine May, who was at that time Clerk of the House of Commons. It is noteworthy of the members of the Breakfast Club that many of them rose to high rank and responsibility. Lord Dufferin's career is now a matter of history; Grant Duff became governor of Madras; Lord Reay (elected in 1879) was governor of Bombay; Acton Bruce and Erskine May were created peers, and of the first Viscount Goschen, who became a member in later days, it is needless to speak, or of Lord Lansdowne, who was elected in 1872.

CHAPTER VII

EVANESCENT CLUBS—NEW CLUBS

ST. JAMES'—BACHELORS'—CLUBS FOR BOTH SEXES—SPORTING CLUBS—CARD CLUBS—BOHEMIAN—THE NEW BEEFSTEAK—THE SAVAGE—THE ARTS—THE WHITE-FRIARS, AND NEW VAGABONDS'—LADIES' CLUBS—PROVINCIAL CLUBS.

THE increase of clubs was unceasing in London as the nineteenth century progressed ; but some were evanescent and closed their doors after a brief although brilliant career. More than one owed its origin to Douglas Jerrold, the wittiest man of his time, whose fine social qualities, humorous talk and flashing repartees, made him the life and soul of a club. He created the Mulberry in 1824, which met at the humble tavern near Covent Garden and prospered for many years, and, under the changed name of the Shakespeare, owned as members Charles Dickens, Daniel Maclise, Macready, and Judge Talfourd. “But respectability killed it,” is the requiem of its chronicler. Douglas Jerrold fathered the Museum Club, and the Hooks and Eyes, and he was the first president of the Whittington, established in 1848 at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand. It had a constituency of sixteen

hundred, of whom four hundred were ladies, and encouraged various diversions, lectures, balls, and fencing. The premises were destroyed by fire in 1854, but the house was rebuilt and the club still flourishes.

Of the same date were the Erechtheum, the Coventry and the Parthenon, all now dead. The first was in St. James' Square, at the York Street corner, where the Portland Whist Club is now placed ; it was formed by Sir John Dean Paul, the baronet banker, whom evil fate overtook later and the club was famous for his dinners. The Parthenon Club was in the east side of Regent Street, and became afterwards the Gallery of Illustration, with a part of its premises allotted to the Raleigh, a club still extant, having survived a rather roystering record when patronised and largely frequented by “men about town,” often addicted to high play and late hours.

The St. James' Club is the especial home of the diplomatists and cordially welcomes all foreigners of distinction. It began life in a wing of the old house of “Crockford's” when three parts of the house was appropriated to the Wellington restaurant. The entrance to the club was in the side street, Bennett Street. Sir Francis Burnand in his “Reminiscences” calls it (when located in its present site in Piccadilly) a delightful club, unique in its way. Certain Continental customs flourish, such as the second breakfast, or *déjeuner à la fourchette* ; billiards

are permitted on Sundays, and the card tables are kept open. A music-room is maintained, and the piano may sometimes be heard on the Sabbath afternoon. A good deal of high play was common at the club, and the rule obtained of a weekly settlement by the members through the intermediary of the secretary.

Many distinguished persons have always been found among the members of the St. James'—great officials from the Foreign Office, ambassadors, and others of note in the diplomatic body. Such men as Sir Edward Thornton, Sir Edward Malet, Sir John Walsham, Lord Rowton, and others were included in the list, and lights in the musical and dramatic world, such as Sir Arthur Sullivan, Sir Frederick Clay, and Sir Francis Burnand. To-day the Marquis de Soveral is to be found there constantly, as was Count Schuvaloff in times past, although when relations were strained with Russia members of the Czar's embassy did not always gain ready election.

A modern club of fashion and distinction is the Bachelors' at the corner of Piccadilly and Park Lane, much favoured by the *jeunesse dorée*. It is exclusive, will admit no foreigners, and, acting up to its title, so approves of celibacy that marriage disqualifies for membership, and any member who becomes a Benedict must stand the ballot of the committee to be permitted to remain on the list. Ladies are accepted as visitors, but on the responsibility of their

introducers, who risk expulsion if their friends are not absolutely above suspicion, and ladies must be those eligible for presentation at Court. Play prevails to a great extent, and the maximum points allowed are high. Thus, at whist, one pound points and five on the rubber may be played ; at bridge, five pounds per hundred points and five pounds on the rubber ; at piquet, one shilling points ; and at *écarté*, two pounds on each game. Debts of honour are settled weekly, on every Monday.

Some modern clubs have adopted a new idea—that of amalgamating the sexes, and good types of these are the Grosvenor, the Albemarle, New Almack's, and the Bath. The first of these was established on a professional basis for members associated with science, literature, and art, and belonging to the clerical and liberal professions, and the Army and Navy. A special ladies' drawing-room is provided, while luncheon-, dining- and supper-rooms are kept exclusively for the softer sex. A feature of the Grosvenor is its affiliation with many clubs abroad, including such clubs as the Jockey Club of Mexico, the Australian Club at Sydney, the County Club at Shanghai, and the English Club at Brussels. The Albemarle, named after the street in which it was placed, is also a club for both ladies and gentlemen in equal numbers, four hundred each, and visitors of both kinds are admitted, with the *proviso* that their names and addresses must be entered

if they pass beyond the outer hall. The New Almack's on Hay Hill is a composite club, formed primarily for bridge-playing, but providing also the luxuries of a comfortable home, where ladies are made welcome to enjoy the popular game for which the sex shows such peculiar aptitude. The Bath Club is an instance of the growth of luxury in daily life and many facilities are given for swimming and the practice of athletics in the gymnasium of the club. Bedrooms and residential chambers are provided for members, guests are admitted and permitted to play cards.

In a land where sports of all kind are so largely cultivated sporting clubs are likely to abound. They are headed by the most famous of all, the Jockey Club, first started in the reign of George II., and still governed by rules enacted in 1888. Paris has also its Jockey Club, composed of men of the highest rank and most undeniable fashion. The Turf Club, formerly the Arlington, was organised in 1870, and is run on liberal lines. Smoking is allowed in the dining-room after 9.20 p.m. The stranger is admitted to dine and use the reception-rooms. No hazard or games of chance may be played. Settlement of card debts must be completed weekly on Mondays before 6 p.m. and while still unpaid, members are not allowed to play; if still in default by Thursday the offender ceases to be a member. No

betting or racing transaction may take place within the club. Election is by the committee's ballot with a quorum of seven, and two black balls exclude.

The Badminton is a club devoted to the encouragement of coaching and field sports. The Isthmian is also a club for those who play games, the qualification is educational, and candidates must have belonged to the best public schools or have been admitted to Oxford or Cambridge. There is a Sports Club, and Prince's Club is devoted to the business of racquets and tennis. Hurlingham, Ranelagh, and Roehampton, seated on the outskirts of town amidst beautiful surroundings, encourage out-of-door games and especially polo, the ancient Persian diversion now so thoroughly domesticated in the Western world; at all the noble game of golf finds many followers, and the niceties of the still popular game of croquet are closely observed. Society has come to patronise these clubs continually as a means of display by ladies of the milliner's art, and great opportunities are offered at all for gastronomic self-indulgence and abundant good cheer.

The great gambling clubs of the past are dealt with more at large in the chapter on "Play,"¹ and to-day no gambling is tolerated by law, although large sums, no doubt, still change hands at games of skill with playing cards, and at billiards. Card

¹ See post, chap. xi. "Play at Clubs."

clubs of some eminence exist where the play is of an orderly and legitimate character. One of the first is the Portland, at the corner of St. James' Square, to which it moved from Stratford Place, having begun in Bloomsbury Square. It numbers only three hundred members, but has acknowledged authority as the arbiter of disputes and for the promulgation of rules. The Portland has of late done for "bridge" what it laid down for whist: established the proper methods to be observed in playing the great modern game.¹ The points at whist are from ten shillings to a maximum of one pound; at bridge, three-penny points to one shilling, or five pounds per hundred. Guests are admitted to dine, and may afterwards play in the small north card-room, but must not enter the members' card-room.

Another high-class card club is the Baldwin in Pall Mall East, into which no strangers are admitted. It opens at two o'clock in the afternoon and closes at two in the morning. Half-crown points for whist are the rule; each game at *écarté* is scored at five shillings, the bridge points are the same as at the Portland.

Cards are popular at most clubs, whist and nowadays bridge² are constantly played in the afternoon

¹ The Portland played whist by the rules drawn up by "Cœlebs" in 1851. Twelve years later Mr. John Loraine Baldwin got together a committee at the Arlington, the precursor of the Turf, and prepared the code in general use.

² Bridge, see post, chap. xii. "Play at Clubs—*continued*."

and till late into the night. So absorbing is the passion, that players at some clubs will not leave the card-room for dinner, but will be satisfied if sandwiches or soup are brought to them for consumption while standing out as dummy. The St. James' already mentioned has been a great headquarters, and it was here that Lord Henry Bentinck, a famous whist votary, invented the "Blue Peter," or call for trumps, the putting down of a higher card when a lesser would have served. He is said to have regretted the invention, which greatly added to the difficulties of the game. The story is told of Lord Henry Bentinck that, when he was on a visit to Middleton Park, his hostess, Lady Jersey, swept the country round to pick up the finest whist players she could find. Lord Henry was asked, when seated at a rubber, how he liked the game. He answered contemptuously : "What do you call it ? It seems rather amusing."

One or two famous clubs, Bohemian in their origin and in the principles on which they were governed, are no longer entitled to their name. The Beef-steak Club of to-day is the most fashionable and exclusive of coteries, and there is a certain affectation in its methods. To be some one is an essential qualification, although modest professional workers have found admission, and are sometimes more acceptable than the best-known men about town. In no London club has the ballot box wielded by

the committee more power to wound and disappoint aspirants to the honour of election. Yet the boon brings little solid advantage. The club so much in request is no more than one room, a long, narrow refectory, with a single table, and the chief privilege of members is unrestricted intercourse; peer and plebeian sit side by side and converse without introduction, and smoke pipes (if they choose) in the middle of dinner. The talk is general; there is no privacy, no topics are tabooed, although an enterprising journalist may sit next the cabinet minister and be hungry for "copy."

The ideal Bohemian Club is the Savage, which has a present position far above its aims and intentions, and has the more missed them the more eminent it has become. The Savage Club has won itself a distinct place in clubland. It can compare favourably with more ambitious gatherings somewhat akin to it, although it never aspired to compete with them. Its growth from very modest beginnings, its development, from a tavern-haunting "free and easy" to a dignified self-respecting assemblage of high-toned, generally intellectual men of the world, is, as many must allow, a creditable feat, and a proof of the status it has achieved.

The Savage¹ was started in 1855 as an association

¹ The Savage Club has recently found its own chronicler, Mr. Aaron Watson, who has treated his subject ably and fully. I have ventured to lay his valuable work (Fisher Unwin) under contribution, in my desire to make this record as far as possible complete.

of "working men in literature and art," and a select number of authors, artists, and journalists met about that date at the Crown Tavern in Vinegar Yard in convivial companionship. The club rapidly grew in favour. Those who joined it were of active, enterprising nature, and some of the keenest spirits conceived the happy idea of giving an amateur theatrical performance for a charitable purpose at the Lyceum, which was patronised by Queen Victoria and the Royal Family. They played the "School for Scandal" and the "Forty Thieves," a new version of the famous old extravaganza, adapted and written into by such eminent hands as Planché, Henry Byron, Leicester Buckingham, Frank Talfourd, and the two Broughs. There were some admirable actors, among others Frank Vizetelly, John Hollingshead, Walter Thornbury, Godfrey Turner, William Romer, and Albert Smith. A net profit of some £300 was the result.

At this time the club numbered many well-known people among its members, such as George Cruikshank, J. L. Toole, Paul Bedford, Shirley Brooks, Tegetmeier, the naturalist, Dion Boucicault, and George Augustus Sala. It was nomadic in its habits and moved frequently, first to the Nell Gwynne Tavern, next to the Gordon Hotel, Covent Garden, and again to Ashley's Hotel in Henrietta Street. The success of the club was rather doubtful financially, but it was popular and well spoken of.

“Such nights of wit and wisdom, of song and story ! The best men of London present and every man at his best,” wrote Stephen Fiske, the well-known American journalist, to a New York newspaper. Others commended the “ hospitality and good fellowship and the catholicity of brains.”

Some notable members of those early days were “Mike” (Andrew) Halliday, Arthur Sketchley, Sir Squire Bancroft, Sothern (Lord Dundreary), Henry S. Leigh, the minor poet, H. J. Montague, the unrivalled *jeune premier*, “Tom” Robertson, of “Caste,” and later Lord Adair, now Lord Dunraven, “Joe” Hatton, Kendal (Grimston), George Henty, the war correspondent, who won great fame as a writer of boys’ books, and W. S., now Sir William, Gilbert, the author of the “Bab Ballads,” with Arthur Sullivan, the composer and his gifted collaborateur.

George Augustus Sala was a prominent member at one time. His name appears in the first list and he served on the first committee, but he did not remain a “Savage” to the last, although twice over he joined it anew. He was the chairman of the “coming-of-age” anniversary dinner of the club, and then paid a well-deserved compliment to the virility of the institution, which had grown into greatness from a humble and unpretending gathering in a small tavern in a back street. Sala’s triumphant progress into the first place as a man of letters was typical of that of the

club, and many who listened to him that evening realised the difference between him then, and the struggling, combative draughtsman and scribbler, who helped to found the old Savage. It was in those early days that the story is told of a letter he addressed to the committee, apologising for his uproarious conduct of the previous evening. "From my headache and the state of my face," he wrote, "I fear I had words with some one last night in the club."

The welcome accorded to eminent brethren of the pen from other countries was always a characteristic feature with the Savage Club. American humorists have been especially popular; Artemus Ward (Mr. C. F. Browne) filled the club with his rollicking fun, and found many congenial spirits among the British Savages. Mark Twain came there from time to time, and became an honorary life member, an honour shared by Oliver Wendell Holmes. James Russell Lowell came to the club as guest when American Ambassador, and Mr. Whitelaw Reid, the present representative of the United, is a life member of the club. Mr. Henri Van Laun was always a popular Savage, a Frenchman with a fluent command of nervous English, as seen in his fine translation of Molière.¹

¹ The present writer had the pleasure to meet Mr. Van Laun as a fellow Savage and renew the acquaintance which had begun when one was pupil and the other professor of French at King William's College, Isle of Man.

Few who were permitted to join in the Saturday evening entertainments at the Savage Club are likely to forget them. The dinner hour was 6.30 p.m. for the convenience of actors who had to "go on," but who liberally helped at intervals in the programme, sandwiched in with other "turns"—a medley from George Grossmith when on the threshold of success, a new poem by Harry Leigh, such as his "ode to a leech," beginning with the words "Drink, pretty creature, drink." The incomparable recitation from Odell, really a great actor whose chief effort was an ode composed in honour of a famous colleague "who played the villain at the Vic," Fred Barnard, admirable draughtsman, whose mimicry of Sir Henry Irving was a joy to all, especially that which ended with the line, "He snatched the precious diamond and—shoved it—in his pocket." An impromptu art exhibition was often organised, when Phil May produced some of his lightning caricatures, and turned out as many as half a dozen heads in coloured chalks in half an hour, and T. B. Hardy, the unrivalled marine painter, could draw an effective water-colour in sixteen minutes.

As time passed the club grew prosperous ; it passed beyond the rough-and-ready temporary lodgings in taverns and second-rate hotels, and blossomed out into its own home, having its own premises, "with servants of its own, with its own cuisine, and its own front door." The first premises were at

Lancaster House, Savoy, in 1881,¹ and about that time his present Majesty, as Prince of Wales, accepted a life membership. After nine years' residence the club moved to a house in Adelphi Terrace, where it is still located in pleasant surroundings, dating from the time of the Adam Brothers, and rich in the artistic decoration of that period.

For many years past the club has been noted for a large and liberal hospitality, extended continually to personages of distinction. To be entertained by the Savage Club may be counted as one of the best titles of honour conferred upon the great ones of the earth. Many famous people have been welcomed as the guests of the club. Sir Henry Irving was asked to dinner on his return from the United States in 1902. The great Norwegian explorer, Fridtjof Nansen, started for the North Pole after a dinner at the Savage Club, and he was again entertained there when he came back. Lord Charles Beresford, a life member, took the chair at an anniversary dinner in 1896, and Lord Kitchener, the successful soldier who had recovered the Soudan, was made the guest of the evening in 1898. The war correspondents who chronicled his feats of arms had already been entertained. A still more brilliant ovation was their meed after the South African war, when the club delighted to

¹ Aaron Watson, p. 159.

honour ten distinguished journalists, among them Messrs. Melton Prior, H. H. S. Pearse, Prevost, Battersby, and C. E. Hands.

Veterans of the Boer war were also welcomed in General Baden-Powell, the hero of Mafeking, and General the Earl of Dundonald, the dashing cavalry officer, who was one of the first to enter Ladysmith. More peaceful triumphs have been recognised ; arts and sciences, political celebrities and legal luminaries have been honoured by dinners, such as those to Sir Alma Tadema, R.A., Sir Luke Fildes, R.A., Sir William Preece, the great electrician, Mr. Gladstone, the Colonial Premiers, the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Alverstone, Sir Edward Clarke, and Mr. Rufus Isaacs.

The Arts Club was first designed in the early 'sixties on the initiative of Mr. Arthur Lewis, who was well known and widely esteemed in that period as an admirable etcher and most hospitable entertainer of troops of artistic friends. He had been early identified with the volunteer movement and had taken an active part in the formation of the artists corps, officially known as the 21st Middlesex, and soon to be greatly distinguished among the units of the citizen army as one of the best regiments in the service, notable for training, physique, and fitness. Arthur Lewis's rooms in Jermyn Street were a great centre and gathering-place for the men of talent and active brain power, who became the

leading spirits in promoting the Artists' Rifle Corps, which soon grew into an accomplished fact, with definite promise of the assured success it has since attained. The supporters of the new idea were set upon the creation of a rendezvous or headquarters, combining mess-house, drill-shed, and armoury, and in due course they were granted a portion of the old Burlington House for the purpose. By degrees the more prominent members of the corps who embraced painters, sculptors, authors, actors, and the rest, desired to enlarge their place of meeting and expand themselves into a sociable club. At first it was intended to be of the simplest, most Spartan character, with primitive deal wooden benches, and sanded floors, after the manner of the once popular Caffè Greco of old Roman days. The notion was warmly entertained by notable men of the hour, working artists mostly, and the roll included such names as those of Tom Hughes ("Tom Brown's Schooldays"), Field Talfourd, brother of the judge, Lowes Dickinson, the portrait painter, Wyndham Phillips, another portrait painter, "Joe" Jopling, a War Office clerk, an excellent water-colour artist, Anthony Salvin, and the late William W. Fenn, a painter who was early stricken with blindness and bore his affliction with marvellous courage and exemplary good temper.

A year or more elapsed before the club was started in 1863. After vainly seeking suitable

quarters in the neighbourhood of Fitzroy Square, it opened its doors in the old house, 17 Hanover Square, next door to the Academy of Music in Tenterden Street, and immediately opposite the Oriental Club. The first simple aims were abandoned and, instead of deal furniture and sanded floor, the house was handsomely mounted in harmony with the existing decorations of the Adam period in beautiful preservation. It had been the residence of a lady of the Georgian epoch, of doubtful reputation, who had received much company and made a great show. Carved marble mantelpieces, florid and gorgeous, ornamented every chimney ; the ceilings were masterpieces, painted by Angelica Kauffmann ; the staircases were of magnificent old oak ; several rooms were richly panelled. "Sweet Seventeen," as it came to be called, was a mansion in perfect keeping with the tastes and pursuits of the bulk of those who made it their home. Indeed, when the inevitable order came to move on, and the "house breaker" was called in to tear it down, those art treasures were carefully removed and sold at substantial prices. During the occupancy of the Hanover Square house its walls were constantly enriched by "loan" pictures from the studios of rising painters, and canvases were to be seen temporarily on show which have since become famous.

Finance was rather a stumbling-block in early

days. The proprietary system was in force for a time, but was not a great success, and presently the club deciding to take over its own management, formed itself into a limited company, which passed through some vicissitudes and at one moment narrowly escaped misfortune. Careful and intelligent control, however, extricated the club from its difficulties, and when the company was finally wound up, on its removal to the present Dover Street premises, a considerable surplus in cash was divided among the original shareholders.

The Arts Club in little less than half a century has achieved a brilliant record. Many famous names may be read upon its lists, small men at first, who presently rose to great distinction. Most of the Royal Academicians were members, and at one time the first news of the result of an election at Burlington House was quickly conveyed to the eager assembly in Hanover Square. Lord Leighton and Sir John Millais often came to the Arts Club. The present writer well remembers how Sir John Millais, when he occupied the chair at a house dinner, told us of his resentment at hearing of the advent of a new genius, a young man named Leighton, who promised to eclipse the best reputations of the hour ; and how, when he made his acquaintance, he speedily succumbed to the charming personality and undoubted talents of the brilliant young painter.

Other eminent Academicians climbed to fame

as members of the Arts. Foremost amongst these were Fred Walker, Val Prinsep, George Leslie, Philip Calderon, Henry Stacy Marks, whose quips and cranks and unending drolleries were the joy of all, little George Story, Edwin Long, and W. B. Burgess ("Spanish" Burgess). Five artists in other lines were prominent members; Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Rossetti, Henry D'Egville, whose luminous drawings of the Venetian lagoons have a very distinct value among treasured water-colours, Fisher, an admirable portrait painter, and famous for his smart, caustic sayings, William Archer. Of much the same kidney were Macbeth, Phil Morris and, in the early stages of their distinguished careers, Sir Luke Fildes and his brother-in-law, Harry Woods. The leading draughtsmen of *Punch*: Sir John Tenniel, looking like a colonel of Cavalry; George DuMaurier, long before his literary success as the author of "Trilby"; Linley Sambourne, and last, but not least, Charles Keene, the unconventional bohemian, one of the greatest masters of "line" drawing, who paused often at the club before he climbed to the top of a 'bus from which to survey and record the humours of London. Charles Keene found many models for his characters among the members of the club.

High art, but not exactly academic, was represented by Whistler, with his white forelock and shrill falsetto voice; by Colonel Robert Goff, a guardsman and a painter etcher of the very first quality, and by

the inimitable caricaturist, Carlo Pelligrini, a man of good family but a perfect type of the Neapolitan lazzarone, full of quaint buffoonery, given to wild ways and laughable self-indulgence, who sent ahead his particular ingredients for his salad when asked out to dinner, and cooked macaroni at table for his host and his guests. Pelligrini's whimsical English was a delight to us all ; he never spoke grammatically, addressed one as " my fellow," asked for a friend, " Is Goff a-gone ?" And he swore quaint oaths compounded of several languages. He was fond of going to sleep on a sofa in the drawing-room and one night late the whole house was convulsed by his cries for help. When quite comatose he had carelessly slipped a lighted match into his trowsers pocket, where it ignited a box of vesuvians, which exploded like fireworks and it was no easy matter to extinguish Pelligrini.

Some other painters added to the fame of the Arts Club : Heywood Hardy, the animal painter ; Edwin Hayes, unrivalled in sea-scapes ; Edwin Hughes, most fashionable of portrait painters ; Haynes Williams, an historical painter ; Seymour Lucas, the same ; Pilleau, a retired army surgeon, who produced excellent work to a very advanced age ; " Tommy " Cooper, the prematurely aged son of his veteran father, the evergreen academician, who produced his fresh-air pictures of cattle in the lush meadows round Canterbury to within a year or

two of his death ; and George Coleman, with his faithful reproduction of old blue china. The sister arts flourished ; Music was represented by Sir George MacFadden, Walter MacFadden, Henry Leslie, and Johnny Forster, the organist, Federici, the opera singer, Sir Julius Benedict, and Signor Randegger, well-known leaders of orchestras. Literature was always to the front, and fame came to the Arts by the early support given by Charles Dickens himself, who readily presided at house dinners and was in sympathy with its ways. Edmund Yates was an original member of the club and frequented it constantly, to the huge satisfaction of the members, for he was ever a joyous spirit and the life and soul of the Saturday-night gatherings. Algernon Swinburne, the poet, was a constant attendant, and would sit till the small hours. Mr. Comyns Carr was a much-appreciated companion especially at the banquets, where he established his reputation as one of the best after-dinner speakers of his time.

Before dismissing Bohemian Clubs, both ragged and resplendent, a word must be given to the Whitefriars, an offshoot of the Savage, a select band of journalists, actors, and artists, who, in their own words, "met together in mutual regard and gracious fellowship, to discuss the affairs of the universe over a tankard and a pipe." They were merry meetings, and some famous writers joined them,

such men as George Meredith and Thomas Hardy, among others. The New Vagabonds had also some charming gatherings, and the club did honour to some great ones of the world, including Earl Roberts, who became a member.

A notable feature in modern club life is the creation of the Ladies' Club, the house devoted especially to the softer sex. It is the outcome of that emancipation of woman, now so generally acknowledged, the right conceded to the female to do pretty well all that the male does, in most walks and ways. "My club" is a phrase as often heard on charming feminine lips as on those of the most determined club *habitué*. Yet the women's club, at its best and showiest that is to say, is essentially of quite recent origin. From small beginnings they have grown into prominence, many owning fine establishments, supported by large constituencies and commanding substantial revenues. They are quite incorporated into our social life; success has stimulated imitation, and the cry is "Still they come." The Empress, one of the most palatial and fashionable numbers more than two thousand members, drawn from the smartest people in town and country. Among others, the Ladies' Army and Navy has achieved an assured and vigorous vitality. In the best, certain qualifications are essential, high tone and unblemished character, with often the condition of eligibility for presentation at Court. In the feminine

Service clubs, dependence rests generally upon relationship to some naval or military officer, even in a remote degree. The story runs that in one particular case a lady's claim was accepted, although it rested on the grounds that she had once been engaged to a militia officer. There has been a great increase of female clubs, catering for the large crowd of brave and intelligent ladies who labour at intellectual pursuits and are constantly engaged in earning their own livelihood in the various walks now happily open to them, as in art and letters, music, science, and secretarial work.

The key-note, the first condition of these modern gatherings, is their respectability. Very careful and precise rules have been devised to ensure this, and are rigidly enforced. The admission of visitors is for the most part strictly supervised, their conduct and characters closely observed. Callers, casual or by invitation, are generally expected to enter their names in a book at the porter's lodge, and must be met by their friends in the hall or upon the threshold of the club. No one is permitted to pass the portals who has at any time been rejected for election to the club. On the other hand it is rumoured that lady members are sometimes a rule to themselves. It is said that a gentleman once called and asked for a lady friend, and that the porter replied casually : "I am not sure, sir, whether she is in or not. You had better run upstairs and

look for her in the drawing-room yourself." With this permission he proceeded to search the public rooms without success, and when about to retire, discomfited, a strange lady civilly came up and offered to help him. "You want Mrs. So-and-So, do you? She is not here, I know. Won't I do as well?"

The benefits conferred by their clubs must be greatly appreciated by ladies. The provision of bedrooms is an immense boon to country members, or others shut out temporarily from their own homes. The privilege is accorded for a certain fixed period, a fortnight, as a maximum generally, although the term may be extended if the demand is not great. The club accommodation equals, if it does not surpass, that of a first-class hotel, and prices are not excessive. Charges run to six or seven shillings per night, and chaperonage, official and composite, so to speak, is undeniable. Ladies can return hospitalities more easily at their clubs than at home; they may give afternoon teas and receptions, can entertain their friends at luncheon or dinner comfortably, although not always cheaply.

As a rule prices in ladies' clubs are higher than in the older male houses. Breakfast for eighteen-pence will compare favourably perhaps, but the set charges for luncheon at two shillings or half-a-crown may seem expensive to economical men, content with a cut off a cold joint for eightpence; but ladies

possibly require more at this essentially feminine meal. Good living is not by any means despised or unattainable in ladies' clubs, and their cellars are said to be as well supplied and as largely patronised as those of any clubs in London. One of them, indeed, had the credit of having laid down some of the best champagne imported, and of having done full justice to it.

If in most cases charges run high, it may be fairly pleaded that profits must be made when income is on the whole rather less. Finance with them depends rather on the numbers that pay subscriptions than on the individual amounts. One of the largest has been satisfied with an entrance fee of four guineas for town members and two for country. The Empress, however, asks five guineas entrance fee with fifteen guineas annual subscription from town members, ten guineas from country members residing in England and Wales, and five if they reside in Scotland or Ireland.

The most pleasing feature of female club life, both useful and interesting, presents itself nowadays in the commendable institutions, already briefly mentioned, which provide a home for ladies who are "on their own," the independent female workers who labour for themselves and who richly deserve, when their day's toil is done, to find a modest but well-managed place of residence, safe, sheltered, replete with comfort and convenience. There are

several, such as that in Oakley Street, where the hitherto unprotected find pleasant companionship, with assured privacy if they desire it, under the wing of a friendly and attentive management. The "Twentieth Century" Club is another of the same class in Stanley Gardens, W. It was started with the avowed intention of providing at a reasonable cost a comfortable home, combined with the facilities of a high-class club for ladies (not invalids), engaged in professional or other work in London.

The club is a private enterprise, the property of a limited company, governed by directors, who elect members, frame rules, and generally control the interests of the institution. The system is a satisfactory advance upon the old boarding-house or private lodging with its dingy surroundings, squalid furniture, and unappetising, ill-cooked food. The club tariff is admirable and fixed at most moderate prices. Half-a-guinea weekly, the average cost of a room for the same period, supplies daily breakfast and dinner in the evening at 7.30. Luncheon is also ready at eightpence a head, but this meal is preferably taken out, as the bulk of the members are away from the club-house during working hours. Other viands, as shown on a large and liberal list, can be obtained at all reasonable hours, and beer, wines, and spirits are supplied to members and their friends. The chief charm of the club is the daily

life partly private, partly congregate, either or both, to suit individual tastes.

Clubs have been formed on a much lower level by philanthropic ladies with the charitable intention of brightening the lives and ameliorating the condition of their poorer sisters. One of the most estimable may be quoted here as a type of the rest. This is the Mayfair Working Girls' Club, the members of which belong to the poorest and most friendless class, women and young girls who work in factories, or to whom the tailors and costume-makers in Bond Street and Regent Street let their work. Kindly people were shocked by the squalor and gloom of their lives while deeply impressed with the courageous way in which they faced their trials, and an active committee was formed, under the presidency of Lady Salisbury, to come to their assistance.

A club was begun in St. Martin's Street to lodge a certain number, and now larger premises have been opened in Charlotte Street, where many more can be taken at the small sum of seven-and-sixpence weekly. A marked improvement has been noticed in the boarders, who are quiet, industrious and well-behaved. The lodgers work at various trades in the club-house. When they are out of work in the dead season, they are induced to remain there at nights, especially on Saturdays, so as to avoid the low music-halls, and are amused by

gratis performances given by lady amateurs at the club.

Every city in every civilised country has some sort of clubs in these modern days, and to make a comprehensive list of them would be a wearisome and even monotonous task. Some are of the highest character in aspect and manners ; many, simple and unpretending ; but all have been called into existence by the same needs and are governed on much the same lines.

We might pause to say a word for the great clubs of the United States, the Union and the Union League, the Manhattan, the Lotos, and many more, all mounted magnificently, run lavishly, with exquisite cooking and the choicest wines ; the clubs of some colonial cities would claim description, if space were unlimited in these pages. But the object of this book is to deal chiefly with London clubs, those especially with a history and a great repute. England possesses many fine provincial clubs established in the principal places of the Kingdom. Edinburgh can point with pride to its New Club, its Caledonian United Service, its Scottish Conservative, with a list of 2250 members ; Dublin owns several fine clubs, the Kildare Street, for example, and the Hibernian United Service ; Glasgow boasts of its Western Club, and Newcastle has the Northern Counties. The Yorkshire Club in York is still the gathering-place of the best people in the three

Ridings ; and Winchester is the home of the Hampshire Club, at which no resident of the county may be entertained, on the principle that he ought to be a member, a rule that obtains also at the Yorkshire.

Watering-places and towns of pleasure—Brighton, Dover, Folkestone, Cheltenham, and Leamington—have all their clubs, popular and well supported. Yachtsmen have their resting-places by the sea ; Plymouth is the headquarters of the Royal Western Yacht Squadron, Portsmouth of the Corinthian, Dublin of the St. George, London of the Thames Yacht Club, and the Royal Yacht Club, first and most exclusive of all clubs, basks in the sunshine of imperial and royal personages at Cowes.

CHAPTER VIII

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

MANAGEMENT, PRICES, FINANCE—ENTRANCES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS
— EXPENSES — OUTLAY AND COST — THE COFFEE-ROOM—
CELLARS—SERVICE—THE HALL PORTER—THE CHEF—HOUSE
STEWARD—WINE BUTLER.

CLUB life, in its many and varied aspects, is more or less familiar to the public, for it is enjoyed by pretty well all the world, but the inner working, the machinery of administration, the business details and intricate arrangements that exist to secure the comfort and wellbeing of the whole body of members, are known only to those who are behind the scenes. No doubt club management is very much that of an hotel, but hotels are run for profit, and clubs seek only to pay their way with a safe margin of balance on the right side. Economical working is of course essential in the interests of the owners of the concern, but thrift cannot be carried too far ; even at the expense of embarrassment the members will insist upon having all they want, and more or less unconcernedly leave it to their governing body to make both ends meet. This is an obvious necessity, an inevitable

day of reckoning comes to us all, when ruin must stare every concern in the face, that does not follow the sage advice of Mr. Micawber.

It is to be feared that the task of reconciling income with expenditure daily becomes more difficult with clubs. There is on the one hand a general increase in prices, and on the other, the diminishing purchasing power of money. The management is constantly faced too with the invincible dislike of club members to the payment of increased subscriptions. The latter may indeed, at no remote date, bring things to a deadlock, for, as we know, the courts have decided that the main body of a club is entitled to resist any attempt on the part of the committee to increase its annual income, except by a general plebiscite or unanimous expression of its sovereign will. So, although faced by an outlay constantly growing day by day, the revenue remains the same and is indeed always liable to fall behind, being more and more burthened by the growth of luxurious facilities, and less and less equal to the demands they impose. Some ingenious expedients have been devised for remedying this, such as the increased rating of new members in enlarged entrance fees and additional subscriptions, but there is naturally a limit to this, and the practice of having two classes of members paying different dues must always be open to objection.

The problem still remains, pressing always for

solution, namely, how best to meet the steadily increasing charges under all heads. In regard to rates and taxes for instance, the burden is becoming almost intolerable. Again, the introduction of passenger lifts has become a necessity in the great clubs, the provision of telephonic service and the installation and maintenance of electric light have added much to the yearly outgoings. The price of provisions grows higher and higher, and the maximum return recovered from the consumers is soon reached, or there would be chronic discontent in the club. One way or another the successful conduct of a club calls for expert skill, not always within reach under the prevailing system of management in all but proprietary establishments, where of course an outsider, the owner or master-contractor, protects himself in the first place, and the club may be mulcted proportionately.

The system of club administration has been slowly and carefully evolved through the slow process of years, and it may be interesting to describe it in some detail. The governing principle is of course finance, the revenue obtainable from all sources, and the manner, economical or otherwise, in which it is expended. The sources of income are the entrance fees from new members and the annual subscriptions exacted from all. Most of the great clubs are agreed upon these points, and the charges imposed vary very little in clubs of the first rank.

The payments exacted for the privilege of membership run on much the same lines ; fees for admission range between twenty and forty guineas or pounds, the subscriptions may be seven, eight, even ten or twelve guineas per annum.

The best military clubs mostly charge the highest price ; the entrance is £40 to the Army and Navy, and to the Junior United Service ; it is forty guineas in the Naval and Military, but only £30 in the United Service Club or Senior, and thirty guineas in the Guards'. The subscription is the smallest in the first-named, but seven guineas for old members is raised to ten guineas for five years with newcomers ; men at the Senior United Service pay ten guineas, at the Junior and Naval and Military eight, except for an occasional whip ; at the Guards' it is eleven for officers on full pay and ten guineas for officers on half pay. None of the great political and social clubs, except the Carlton with £40, impose so high an entrance fee. At the Junior Carlton it is thirty-five guineas, at Brooks', the Turf, the Travellers', Athenæum, and Arthur's it is thirty guineas, the Garrick no more than twenty-one, and at White's nineteen.

These annual subscriptions reach the topmost level where the constituency is limited, and in some cases the club needs increased revenue to meet the demands of higher rentals and renewals when it is not

the fortunate possessor of its own premises. Some clubs own their own freeholds, encumbered it may be with debentures and mortgages, but the land value in these days of marvellous West-End "betterment" is going up by leaps and bounds. Hence the corresponding increase of imperial and parochial taxation, which has grown into a grievous burden. Others, less happily placed, are weighted with the provision of sinking funds to meet, as has been said, premiums for renewal of leases in the far or near future. One class of receipts are exactly calculable, the subscriptions from the generally fixed number of members ; but the fees from the members admitted is of course variable, being dependent on the vacancies accruing. The average income amounts to between ten and twenty thousand pounds a year, a sum which cannot be constant, and fluctuates according to circumstances, such as the health and comparative longevity of the members of the club.

The first and most serious outlay after the rent or its equivalent, is the cost of the staff, first, that of the superior supervising officers, and next the great body of servants, high and low, upon whose attention and care the ease and comfort of the members entirely hang. After the secretary and manager with his clerical assistants, who are usually well paid, the heaviest item of expenditure is on the kitchen, which is run upon large, liberal and, it might sometimes

seem, rather extravagant lines. The *chef* is not a cheap artist ; between £200 and £300 a year is the average salary paid him, and he is only one, the chief *officier de bouche*, who cannot get on without a number of more or less expensive assistants. There must be a second cook, who is especially entrusted under the *chef* with the primary business of soups and sauces and the serving up. A third man cook is often to be found, and the rest of the work falls upon kitchen-maids, each, excepting the head kitchen-maid, with her own speciality ; to wit, the fish-maid, roasting-maid, broiling-maid, pastry-maid, one or more vegetable-maids, a scullery-maid and odd-maid, with functions to give general help to all. A baker, often the pastry cook also, attends to his own branch ; there are lift-men, a porter, and a scullery-man, and two clerks whose duty it is to attend to the dinner bills sent down, and to see that the various dishes ordered by members are prepared properly and sent up hot at the time specified. In a good club this duty is performed with great minuteness and precision.

The restaurant or “coffee-room” as it is still styled, following the ancient practice, is closely allied to, and dependent on, the kitchen, and the most vital and important branch in the club management. It carries as a rule the chief burthen of the wages under the head of household. All the servants are charged against it, and the comparative cost, day by

day, of their board is accepted as the test of the economical working, or otherwise, of the restaurant, which, again, is governed by the amount of business done. When the takings are good, when many meals have been consumed that is to say, there is more cooked food unused and there is a larger supply for the servants' table, with a corresponding saving in the further quantity that might be required. In the height of the season when the club is alive and full, the servants' board will fall to zero and may even show at less than nothing ; in dull times the charge will rise to six, seven, eight, even twelve and fourteen shillings per week, the yearly average being as a rule, in well-managed clubs, about five or six. The weight laid upon the coffee-room exchequer will in a measure explain the absence of profits. An outside restaurateur is not called upon to provide a librarian and a bathman, several smoking-room waiters and billiard markers and card-room attendants, a housekeeper, with her staff of still-room maids, a house-superintendent, and a staff of waiters much more numerous than the bare requirements demand.

Some profit may accrue, however, from another branch of the coffee-room, the wine-cellar. The saving on the sale of wine may, by judicious management, become a very valuable asset. A far-seeing committee may lay down early and at reasonable cost the vintage that will some day stand high in

the market ; so that members may drink them when ripe at much less than market price. Nor is it always necessary to provide cash ; wine merchants are willing enough to secure the order and will give the cellarage for wines ripening, to be paid for as consumed. But losses will sometimes accrue to the club on the wine account. Taste changes continually ; some wines as the years pass grow into popularity while others are neglected. Champagne seems likely to perpetually maintain its vogue, but port has gone out and come in again, replacing sherry once in general request but little asked for nowadays, and there is small demand for vintage clarets. Twenty years ago a great West-End club offered for sale among its members a large stock of "Exhibition" or "51" port at quite a nominal price, some 60s. per dozen, eager to dispose of a wine that nowadays is all but priceless. The same process will be repeated probably with the high-class Lafittes and Margaux, for which the call is so scanty that the cellars are being denuded of them. Perhaps in this particular the change is more permanent, for it has followed the now nearly universal custom of smoking at the earliest possible moment after the cloth is drawn. In this matter of smoking, most great clubs are very conservative, and limit the indulgence in tobacco to the rooms set apart for it ; the cigarette after dinner before rising from table is seldom if ever permitted, although the practice

obtains in private houses pretty well everywhere, and in many high-class restaurants.

The maximum returns that can be got from the coffee-room for articles consumed being limited, loss on them is more or less unavoidable, and this is enhanced by the obligation imposed upon the manager to buy in the best markets and from the leading purveyors in the town. Club taste is fastidious and exacting ; members on the smallest pretence will find fault with their food, and are most particular as to its quality and the sources of supply. The very name of New Zealand mutton or Canadian beef is abhorrent to them ; they look askance at goods from co-operative stores ; will have their poultry from Bailey's, fish from famous salesmen, bacon and groceries from the time-honoured shop the club has always patronised.

A most elaborate system of inspection obtains in the receipt of raw material. Every ounce of meat is weighed on arrival, and viewed by the superintendent or a high official, assisted by the *chef*, and the bulk compared with the orders issued. The fish trays are brought in several times a day, on sale or return, so as to ensure freshness ; the same with poultry ; the condition of venison or game is very closely examined daily until the exact moment for cooking them has arrived. A good *chef* will probably keep them and his joints hanging, and test them regularly one by one before the bills of fare are drawn up, and

those in the best order are chosen for the day's consumption. The net result is, or ought to be, that the club man can secure the highest gratification of the palate, with the smallest possible demands upon his pocket. If he is a liberal-minded amphitryon, he may entertain his friend more cheaply than at home ; if he is a solitary feeder, with a strong penchant for the pleasures of the table, he can indulge it very cheaply and with abundant choice. Soup, fish, joint, a set dinner of three courses, is at command for the modest sum of three shillings, or he can choose among a long list of dishes and pay still less. There is a phenomenal dinner handed down by tradition in one well-known club, where the total cost of the three chief constituents only amounted to two shillings ; or, to speak in detail, half a portion of mutton broth hot, fourpence ; one fresh herring (half a portion), twopence ; a chop from the grill, eightpence ; and the "table," covered by vegetables, cheese, and all other accessories, tenpence ; attentive service from a footman in knee-breeches and silk stockings is provided free of charge, the "tip," indeed, is strictly forbidden by the rules. Small wonder the coffee-room does not pay its way !

A club has only itself to thank if it does not command the best and most attentive service. The whole of the staff, from the dignified secretary —in these days generally a military or naval officer of some rank—down to the last appointed page-

boy, have no thought but the interests and fair name of the club, and are devoted to the comfort and well-being of the members. To be attached to a high-class club is, for the domestic servant, practically a provision for life. There is something patriarchal in the system ; places often descend from father to son. The child enters at a tender age, like an apprentice ; he passes on and upward, till in time he occupies an excellent position and is honoured and respected by his employers. The club servant has, as a rule, a very snug billet ; his wages are probably a fraction above the market price, the work, save at special seasons, is not unduly severe, pensions are granted in the end when health and strength break down, while there are clubs in which subscriptions *ad hoc*, or some well-managed benevolent institution, afford a present help in time of trouble and domestic distress. No club servant cares to forgo the manifest advantages of club service, and they act in the manner of a premium upon good behaviour. There are never many changes in the staff, and those who join come to stay. The members, indeed, do not like to see new faces about them, and look upon their people as personal retainers. The servants in return render old-fashioned fealty to their masters and take a deep interest in all that concerns them, a pride in their success, and a cordial sympathy in their sorrows and affliction.

The hall porter, although not the first in rank, is in many ways the first in importance, often the most trusted and confidential of club servants, acquainted with, and often entrusted with, the most delicate affairs. The mere fact that he is the depository of all correspondence delivered at the club gives him a peculiar position, and indeed power, for it cannot be denied that letters are sometimes addressed to a club rather than to a man's private house. This matter of the private address is a curious one ; there is a tradition in all clubs that the secret shall be jealously guarded by the hall porter, not to be surrendered to any inquirer without specific permission, and not always then ; you may order your letters to be sent on to it, be quite sure that they will be held by the hall porter with jealous care and secrecy, and finally, if not delivered or demanded, to be returned to the Postmaster-General. Your presence in the club, again, will not be too readily admitted, if the hall porter in his astute judgment spots an inconvenient caller. Duns will be recognised intuitively, and so often draw blank that they seldom hunt up a debtor at his club : the porter has been known before now to make use of the little waiting-room near the entrance, and close the door upon some pestilent person, male or female, while the member so much in request is smuggled out of the house. The hall porter is the Cerberus at the gate, ever on

guard, suspiciously eyeing all comers, and his close scrutiny of unknown strangers is in marked contrast to his cordial and immediate welcome of his own members. Of course an unerring and inexhaustible memory for faces is an indispensable trait ; it must equal that of a royal prince or of the Roman nomenclator of old. It is a mortal offence not to know a member by sight, to ask his name unpardonable, and a subject for complaint to the committee ; no excuse is admissible, not, as may often happen in a Service club, absence far afield protracted for many years, nor the return with greatly altered aspect, a beard, a clean shave, the loss of limbs, or a scarred face.

Other mistakes that may arise in the multiplicity of his functions and the incessant demands on his quick-witted intelligence will not be easily forgiven. He must not forget those who have gone in or gone out, nor the messages to be passed on to one member from another ; he has to receive and dispose of the parcels that flow in constantly and often annoyingly, as when his lodge is filled to overflowing by the books and circulars which some pertinaciously advertising firm addresses to the whole thousand or two members on the list. Woe to him if he omits to pass on cards of invitations, "commands" to some Court ceremony, which are sent out without envelope and no more address than the recipient's name in the corner ; he is

sharply blamed if he neglects to consign to the ice-room the game, the salmon, and pheasants, which arrive in their season, and to duly report these presents. He is expected to know everything ; the best play to see at the theatres, the day on which the Derby is to be run, and the state of the odds. If you want to lay or take the latter, he will probably charge himself with the job, and will afterwards do the settling for you, just as, if benighted and in want of a bedroom, he will recommend you to chambers or lodgings close at hand, possibly kept by himself, or a friend of his, who is also an employé of the club.

The *chef* must be viewed more seriously ; he is an institution, and his quality, whether inferior, doubtful, or first-class, is a subject for perpetual, and not seldom heated, debate. There are many clubmen with whom the pleasures of the table and the gratification of their palate are the first consideration in life, and their thoughts are for ever concentrated upon the cook and his kitchen. To satisfy them he must be little less than a *cordon bleu*. It is not that they are always competent, although such severely critical judges, really fine gourmets deeply versed in the whole science of the culinary art, or with naturally keen and discriminating taste ; the clubman suffers often enough from jaded appetite and impaired digestion, and it is himself, not the *chef*, that he should blame. There are

of course many varieties of *chef*, but the standard to be met with in London clubs is by no means low. Salaries range from £200 to £300 a year, and this is sufficient to secure a very fair or even superior artist, a Frenchman, well trained and of even good antecedents. The King's own cook, the *officier de bouche*, at Buckingham Palace, came to him from a club in Pall Mall.

The club *chef* is much handicapped by the system generally in force and the work he has to do. The cuisine varies between the commonplace, the daily output of plain dishes, and the highest flights of ambitious cookery. To give complete satisfaction he must be Mrs. Glasse or Mrs. Beeton six days in the week, and Vatel or Carême on the seventh. He is apt to think the lesser business beneath him ; he will not condescend to the roast or the boiled, the proper basting of meat, or its slow stewing ; he leaves such things, as well as the frying of fish, the use of the grill, the confection of puddings and pies, to the various kitchen-maids, the fish-maid, poultry-maid, roasting-maid, and the rest ; the second *chef* attends to the soups and sauces, and the great master himself plays the piano like Mirabolant, and dreams of new dishes and the greater opportunities that will give scope for his genius. So it is that against one or two triumphs liberally praised, there are a host of minor complaints of his, or rather of his subordinates'

delinquencies, in regard to ordinary daily food. The alternative is a well-meant but generally futile effort to personally supervise everything, and by so doing he loses his delicacy of touch and nice appreciation of flavour. Another branch of his business exposes him again to perpetual attack. He is held mainly responsible for the quality of the provisions, and is always under suspicion of unduly favouring the tradesmen who most make it worth his while. The club suffers equally with the average modern housewife from the nefarious custom of secret commissions, to secure which, too often, excessive bills are run up, and the highest prices paid for by no means the best class of goods.

There are many more who minister to the welfare and smooth working of a club—the house steward for instance, or the coffee-room superintendent, or head waiter ; the position is much the same, the title only varies with the size and importance of the club. He is generally a veteran, at least in service, who has long enjoyed the confidence of the members. He is often on intimate and familiar terms with them. There was one good soul who knew all the foibles and failings of his clientèle by heart. A story is told of him that, when a certain titled member, who was a little too fond of stimulants, looked particularly jumpy at luncheon and stared wildly at something he saw cross the floor, the steward came forward and quickly re-

assured him, saying : "It was a mouse, my lord." Another was a constant joy to the members with his language and the views he held. "Tell me, Craggs," some one would ask, "has Mr. So-and-So ordered his dinner ?" "No, sir, and he has not yet intimidated his intention of dining." This Craggs was known to be unfortunate in his family arrangements, and to have separated from his wife. He was condoled with by a member, who went so far as to express a hope that man and wife might some day come together again. "I sincerely trust not, sir," cried Craggs.

The cashier is always ready with a pleasant word for the members as they pay their bills at the desk, and will laugh with them over the items and the total cost, whether above or below the average ; he takes charge of their watches and scarf pins, if they are bound for some rowdy race-meeting. The wine butler is very wise about his wines, very nice in his knowledge of the particular tastes of members. He knows when to offer twenty-year-old brands of cognac and when fifty ; he never forgets to remind his committee, if a strange club is about to become honorary members, that these gentlemen drank so much of one special brand of champagne last time, that the wine had better be temporarily erased from the list during their visit. A story is told of a wine butler in one famous club, who gave himself great airs and claimed to be a supreme judge of quality. "I

beg your pardon, gentlemen," he protested when summoned by some discontented new member, who declared the champagne was corked ; " it is generally the rule to call on me to decide whether a wine is corked or not."

CHAPTER IX

CLUB WAYS

PASSING CUSTOMS—SNUFF-TAKING—SMOKING ; TOLERANCE OF TOBACCO AND ITS GROWING FAVOUR—ADMISSION OF STRANGERS—CONDUCT AND DEMEANOUR OF MEMBERS—LAWS UNWRITTEN AS TO COSTUME—HATS—GOVERNANCE—THE COMMITTEE—COMPLAINTS AND FAULT-FINDING.

IT has been well said that the history of clubs is the history of London manners since the Restoration. The changes in tastes, habits, and customs are plainly reflected in club life. In early times the vice of gaming found its principal outlet in the clubs, many of which were indeed started with that particular intention. How the passion for play grew apace and possessed the town will be shown at length on another page. How the card table, hazard, faro, macao, all the games of the purest chance attracted all classes of society ; titled ladies, great statesmen, silly young sparks aspiring to be in the fashion ruined themselves recklessly and were often utterly lost. Nowhere did bacchanal self-indulgence find greater and more deplorable scope than in the clubs. Roués came there to boast of their conquests, to waste their substance in

riotous living, to drink to the deepest excess. To be overcome in liquor called for no shocked comment. Contemporary records, diaries and journals preserve for us with photographic exactness the manners of those past times. We read that some prominent person, a duke perhaps, a statesman or a notable man of fashion, "came into the club this evening very drunk"; conduct, which to-day would have been followed by the well-merited penalty of expulsion, passed unnoticed, as quite a matter of course. It will be seen from the accounts of some of the earlier clubs that the conviviality which was their chief *raison d'être* degenerated into mere licence, and one of the principal tests of a man's fitness for the society into which he was admitted was that of being a good bottle companion of indefinite capacity.

Reform in these matters was slow. Theodore Hook's great powers of absorption were exhibited at the Garrick as late as 1835, when, one hot summer's afternoon, he disposed quite comfortably of five or six jugs of the inimitable gin punch compounded at that club.

A curious characteristic of the earlier days of club life was the almost universal practice of snuff-taking, and its very slow replacement by the use of tobacco. It was part of a gentleman's education to manipulate a snuff-box elegantly, and the possession of a number of costly specimens of these

receptacles was indispensable. This explains why snuff-boxes of every variety, in gold, silver, enamelled and jewel encrusted, are nowadays so largely found among the curiosities of the collector. George IV., when Prince of Wales, followed, if he did not actually set, the fashion. His example and his manner of taking snuff were imitated by nearly every one, and by no one more successfully than by Beau Brummell, who opened his snuff-box with a particular grace and with one hand only, the left. Snuff was laid down by connoisseurs as carefully as wine, and one fashionable person is mentioned whose stock of snuff was valued at £3,000. The favourite snuff was that sold by Messrs. Fribourg & Tryer, the well-known tobacconists, whose shop to this day still preserves, with its double-fronted bow windows, the appearance of a street in the days of the dandies. These dealers imported their snuff from the West Indies, and the best was known as the "veritable Martinique." A list of applicants for the precious powder was made out long in advance, and on the arrival of this highly prized article, the hogshead was solemnly opened in the shop and submitted to the judgment of some great authority on snuff.

On one occasion Beau Brummell was performing this grave duty. He took a few pinches and condemned the snuff unhesitatingly. "It was not at all the sort of thing that any man with the

slightest pretension to correct taste could possibly patronise." The importers were in despair, for his adverse opinion would soon spread, and the snuff procured at a heavy outlay would probably remain on their hands. The only possible solution in this serious difficulty was to win Brummell over. The Beau was nothing loath to trade on his prestige at a price. Addressing the tobacconist, he pointedly remarked: "By some oversight I did not put my name down on your Martinique list and so I should have got none of this, which as a matter of fact I do not dislike. Since the hogshead had been condemned you will not object to my having three jars full of it. You may mention the fact, and when once known I think there is little doubt there will be a speedy demand for the remainder." Messrs. Fribourg & Tryer gladly accepted the proposal; it was given out that Brummell had bought and paid for the quantity above mentioned, and within a few days the whole consignment was sold out.

A few more words about snuff will be interesting. It seems to have been first introduced into France early in the reign of Louis XV., and old ladies still carried huge snuff-boxes, with miniatures on the lids, in the time of Marie Antoinette. In England Queen Charlotte was a great snuff-taker, and it became fashionable. She was seen on the terrace at Windsor by Captain Gronow with snuff

on her royal nose, extracted from her gold snuff-box by finger and thumb. All old ladies took it. Gronow, when offered a pinch by the Duchess of Manchester in Berkeley Square, took it and sneezed for at least an hour among a crowd of people. The Duchess said enviously that she would indeed be happy if she could sneeze so easily. George IV. carried a snuff-box, but more for show than use. He made a great parade of taking it, and conveyed it consequentially to his nose, but never allowed any to enter, gradually letting it drop away. The performance was only for effect, and no one was deceived. Every one carried a snuff-box, and very intimate friends might offer you a pinch ; but when people less well known asked for it, it was often refused. "Nowadays," says Gronow (1850), "snuff-boxes are on the tables of great people and at messes" ; snuff-boxes generally followed the wine, and people helped themselves. On one occasion Beau Brummell was very rude to the Bishop of Winchester, when they were dining together at the Pavilion with the Prince Regent. The bishop took a pinch from Brummell's box, which lay within reach, whereupon Brummell told his servant to empty the rest of the snuff into the fire. The Prince Regent was very angry and severely reprimanded Beau Brummell next day. This is supposed to have been the first cause of difference between them.

Lord Petersham, so well known as a dandy in

his time, was a confirmed snuff-taker. His private sitting-room was like a shop. Shelves were fixed all round the room bearing tea canisters, Ceylon, Pekoe, Bohea, Gunpowder, Russian, and many other kinds of tea ; there were also beautiful jars with names in gilt letters of various snuffs, each with detailed instructions on and apparatus for moistening and mixing. Lord Petersham's mixture is still well known to tobacconists. On other shelves reposed a great number of magnificent snuff-boxes, for Lord Petersham had perhaps the finest collection in England, enough to provide for every day of the year. A Sèvres china box of light blue he declared a nice summer snuff-box, but he did not approve of it for winter.

Snuff-boxes kept full were to be found in every room in a club-house, and the frequent call for one by an irritable old member was one of the hits in Sir Bulwer Lytton's play, "Money." The supply of snuff was made gratis to members. The cost amounted to £20 or £30 a year, and as the indulgence in tobacco in this form gradually gave way to that of smoking, the expenditure was thought unnecessary. Few people realise how slowly the use of tobacco made its way in society. There was an utter absence of any provision for it in the club accommodation ; either there was no smoking-room at all, or the most meagre arrangements were made for indulging in it. A smoking-room was

not given at the Athenæum for some time after its foundation ; any such place was omitted from the first plan of the Reform Club by Messrs. Bassevi and Blore. There was no provision for it in the original Oriental, and permission to smoke within the walls was not accorded for some forty years, although a constant bone of contention between opposing factions all that time. The persistent resistance of the non-smokers to any improvement in the smoking-room of the Alfred is said to have been a contributory cause to the breaking-up of that club.¹ The room was at the top of the house and stigmatised as an “infamous hole” ; but still the committee would make no concession, and the club was eventually closed, although perfectly solvent, and produced a good balance-sheet at the very last.

The bare tolerance of the weed, and the marked distaste for it among those who claimed to be cultured and refined, lasted till quite recent years, and many of the present generation must have a lively recollection of banishment to the purlieus of the stable-yard and lower regions of kitchen and basement, when they desired to indulge in the newly discovered recreation of smoking. Whatever the reason—and some attribute it to the late Queen Victoria’s dislike of the smell—the practice of smoking was of slow growth in society. The restrictions placed upon it, as just shown, were severe and the

¹ See ante, p. 75, “Alfred Club.”

faculty very generally deemed it obnoxious and deleterious. The clergy disapproved of it, and very few among them ventured to yield openly to its temptations. It was not considered good form to smoke in the streets, and a cigar (cigarettes were not known till long afterwards) was not tolerated in the presence of ladies. It is probably forgotten that smoking was not permitted in regimental mess-rooms and barracks until 1856, nor, strange as it may seem, that no one might smoke in the public rooms and platforms of railway stations, and the smoking-carriage is only a modern concession.

Agitation for permission to smoke began in clubs about the 'thirties, but the demand came from the minority who were constantly out-voted. Although the newer institutions permitted it, the houses were generally planned with very meagre accommodation for smoking, and it was not until 1845 that White's gave up a room for it. It is generally supposed that the stimulus towards the use of tobacco followed the great Exhibition of 1851, when so many foreigners of rank and position were in our midst and were constantly to be seen smoking in the streets and other public places. At White's, as time passed, the clamour for more space grew among the smokers. In spite of great opposition, arrangements were made to give over the billiard-room, and in 1859 a proposal was made to permit smoking in the drawing-room, a place hitherto held

sacred and subjected to rules of very formal decorum. The proposal was carried but not acted upon, as the committee still deferred to the powerful minority. They thought it better to make some other arrangement, and it was suggested to the proprietors that they should build a room on purpose. But nothing was done. In 1866 there was a fresh uprising, and the discontented smokers insisted upon convening a fresh meeting to discuss the ever-burning question. Parties mustered strongly ; old members who had hardly visited the club were dragged in to support the "no tobacco" party, and a resolution to permit smoking in the drawing-room, put forward by the younger members, was lost by a substantial majority. At this time, Mr. Burke, the historian of White's, is of opinion that, "By inducing the club to come to this decision the old school of White's made a grave mistake ; they certainly took a step which had a great influence upon the subsequent fortunes of the club."

It was about this time that His Majesty Edward VII., as Prince of Wales, was on the point of taking his place as the principal personage in London life, and he honoured White's by signifying his intention of becoming a member of the club. Very naturally he favoured the new spirit, and had already become a partisan in the tobacco controversy by giving in his adherence to the smokers. It is said that on the adverse decision made at White's,

His Royal Highness reconsidered his intention of using it largely, and although he became, and has continued to be, an honorary member, he soon afterwards encouraged the formation of a club with more liberal ideas, and the Marlborough, within a few yards of his own residence, came into existence under his auspices, and has since always enjoyed his august patronage and support. The triumph of new ideas might be seen in the regulations of the new club, which permitted smoking in every part of the house except the dining-room.

At this present time of writing (1907) the old prejudices have all but disappeared. Only a few have imitated the Marlborough as yet, and smoking is still restricted to certain apartments, but these are of spacious dimensions and for the most part occupy the best rooms in the house. The Junior United Service Club was one of the first to feel the want, and freely surrendered its handsome library to the smokers ; and this despite the gloomy warning of those who predicted that the books would be greatly injured by the fumes of tobacco, an altogether erroneous idea. Elsewhere steps had been taken in the same direction. The Army and Navy, which started with a smoking-room at the very top of the house, gave up first one and then a second strangers' coffee-room to tobacco, and has more lately had a lift constructed to convey visitors to the original smoking-room upstairs. A determined

effort was made a few years back to extend smoking to the beautiful drawing-room facing Pall Mall, one of the finest rooms in clubdom, but the measure was defeated in deference to the protests of a small section of the older but fast diminishing set, who have never learnt to tolerate tobacco. The Athenæum may be instanced as another proof of the tendency of the times. Until a few years ago smokers were banished to the basement ; now a whole upper floor has been built for their accommodation and a lift constructed to carry them up comfortably to it.

Another marked change instituted in the customs of clubland has been in the admission of visitors from outside—the non-members, who have been constantly styled “strangers,” to signify that they were altogether outside the pale ; trespassers, in short, to be treated with scant ceremony, if not kept entirely at bay. The very name of the meagre apartment provided for them was *Aceldama*, or “the field to bury strangers in.” A few only have maintained this extreme exclusiveness to the present day. The Guards’ Club positively forbids any strangers to enter their doors, nor will one or two more Clubs of to-day. The Carlton will allow them to pass the threshold, but not to go beyond the great hall. The Athenæum has allotted a small chamber near the entrance, where members may give interviews to passing friends and callers. The United Service Club was no less exclusive till quite recent days, but

will now admit visitors to a large part of the house, including the coffee-room, where they may be entertained, but still in strictly limited numbers. Neither the Carlton nor the Athenæum is disposed to give way on this point, although the latter allows a member to give a formal dinner-party in the morning-room, converted for the time being into a house dining-room and at which a maximum of ten guests may be hospitably welcomed. The Travellers' will permit strangers to dine, but not during the Parliamentary season ; the Oxford and Cambridge allows six members to entertain two guests apiece upon giving sufficient notice. At the Garrick a member may introduce three friends to the Strangers' coffee-room for dinner, or two for luncheon or supper, but not more than five times in each year. More liberal rules prevail with regard to the Saturday-night suppers, and the somewhat uncommon privilege of giving luncheon parties to ladies is conceded at the Garrick.

The admission of ladies is not generally approved of in the older male clubs. The story goes that a very masterful member in one of the best military clubs brought his wife to dine, and when challenged, asked for the book of rules, in which he triumphantly pointed to that which gave the permission to invite a friend, and made no specific reservation as to sex. He was no doubt right as to the strict letter of the law, but yielded on the question of good

taste. Hospitality of this kind extending to dinner is not yet adopted, except in the clubs specially constituted to include both sexes, such as the Albemarle, which consists of eight hundred members, male and female in equal numbers, and used jointly by them, except that ladies are not admitted to the two front smoking-rooms. At the Grosvenor there is a ladies' drawing-room for the friends of members, and luncheon, with dining- and supper-rooms exclusively reserved for ladies, also a ladies' tea-room for members and their lady guests, where coffee and liqueurs may be served them after dinner. A lady is permitted to enter alone and use the club if known to, and recognised by, the hall porter as the wife of a member, or on production of a letter from some member.

The East India United Service Club, in St. James' Square, opens its doors to ladies for luncheon in the guests' room, at all times, save when the club is crowded ; they may partake of the club fare as shown upon the day's menu, the one condition being that they should leave the house before 6 p.m. The Oriental was slow to tolerate the admission of ladies. Mr. Baillie, in his history of the club, quotes a minute from the club records to the effect that :

“ It having been brought to the notice of the committee that ladies have been supplied with refreshments in the strangers' room, the committee

have found it necessary to decide that the practice is very reprehensible and should be discontinued, and the waiters of the club are instructed accordingly." This was in 1861, and in the year following the ukase was republished ; but the spirit of the times and the temper of the club must have changed, for as the rule stands now, "Ladies, when accompanied by a member, may be admitted to the strangers' room for tea, coffee, or light refreshment between the hours of four and six daily."

A liberal spirit prevails nowadays in many clubs, which places few restrictions upon the admission of male visitors. The Naval and Military was one of the first to throw the house open to them, practically ; they were permitted to share the general members' coffee-room, a privilege conceded in part by the Junior United Service and the Rag, and, as has been said, of the Senior.

The conduct and personal demeanour of members are for the most part governed by usage and custom, varying somewhat from time to time and following written and unwritten rules. It is an accepted principle that no "vails" or "tips" shall be given by members to the servants of the club ; a stringent regulation to that effect will be found in almost all books of rules. But there is a commendable practice of opening a subscription at Christmastide for a fund to be divided amongst the whole number. Again the members are forbidden, often expressly,

but always by the practice of the club, to personally reprimand servants ; a representation must be made to the secretary or committee, with whom disciplinary management entirely rests.

Two good stories in this regard are told in Mr. A. F. Baillie's history of the Oriental Club. In one case a member was dissatisfied with the Gruyère cheese, calling it French not Swiss, and he insisted that the waiter who brought it to him should taste it. The waiter demurred, and the member complained of his misconduct to the committee. But the governing body took the waiter's part, conceiving rightly, as we must allow, that it was no part of the waiter's duty to act as cheese-taster. In the second case a member removed his boots before the library fire, and presently walked off in his stockinged feet into another room. The library waiter, finding the ownerless boots, took them away, and the member on his return was so greatly annoyed that he stormed at the waiter, speaking to him, according to the waiter's evidence "very strong." Here again the committee, to whom it was referred, sided with the waiter. Every member with the commonest spark of gratitude and good feeling will as a rule side with the waiter, who richly deserves Thackeray's encomium as "the civilest, the kindest, the patientest of men."

Laws are very variable about dress and have changed continually as to what is for the time being

de rigueur. There is a freedom and independence nowadays in the matter of costume, which would have ineffably shocked the beaux and dandies of the past. The fastidious nicety of apparel, the slavish pursuit of the fashion modelled on the creations of the Prince of Wales, Brummell, Lord Petersham, and the rest, are not observable in even the most gorgeous youths of this present period, who, as a rule, are more concerned for the fit of their boots and putties, and the sit of their riding breeches, than their neckcloths or their skintight frock coats. In one direction alone does the modern practice strictly obtain, that of "evening clothes" at the dinner table, even in the "tiled" and sheltered seclusion of the club. Through the day men wear very much what they please, tweeds, dittoes, soft hats, and straws. The hat question has given rise to some controversy in clubs; in some it would be thought bad taste to keep them on indoors, in others it has been the traditional usage to do so at all times and in all parts of the house. At the Army and Navy club, the old "Rag," the practice (now abating somewhat) has survived from those early days, it is said, when the new house was so bare and the funds so limited that the management economised on coals, and the members were at great shifts to keep themselves warm. At one time the hat was in universal wear, even in the coffee-room and at the table, although for comfort's sake it

was generally deposited under a man's chair, and in the library when used as a dormitory (as is frequently the case) it found a place on the mantelpiece. Two other clubs appear to have done much the same as regards the wearing of hats ; the Oriental and the St. James'. At the first, although the hat may be worn at breakfast or lunch, it must be removed at the principal meal. The distinguished diplomatists who gather at St. James' follow much the same rule.

The committee of a club has an uncommonly hard part to play. It is even worse off than most other corporate bodies, which, according to the saying, "have no bodies to be kicked and no souls to be saved." It suffers moral castigation perpetually, and is condemned for all manner of sins, as though it were a sentient and responsible human being. To a large number of those it represents and relieves of personal service, it is an habitual and heinous offender ; the very converse of the Sovereign in our Constitution. It is for ever assailed with growls and grumbles and bitter reproaches. Innumerable mistaken acts of omission and commission are laid at its door ; it is blamed repeatedly for doing too much or too little, for the things it has done and the things it has left undone. It succeeds in pleasing nobody.

"I cannot come to the club," cries one chilly mortal ; "the committee lets the temperature

fall below freezing point." Another swears the house is so insufferably hot he is always in a fever. The lighting is an everlasting bone of contention ; some say the glare of the electroliers is positively blinding, others that the lamps have been so stupidly placed (by the committee of course) that one cannot see to read the evening papers. In the matter of creature comforts, the food and drink especially, members are always most critical, and the committee bears the brunt of it all. There are never-ending disputes as to the items on the daily menu and the prices charged. "Ribs of beef again !" an aggrieved malcontent reads off the list of joints provided ; "upon my word they deserve to be tarred and feathered." The imposition of an additional penny for the supply of cream with tea or coffee almost produces a revolution. The question of the *chef* and his culinary skill is a perpetual subject of dispute. "Where on earth could the committee have found such an incompetent ass ?" His soups are a disgrace to any decent kitchen ; his sauces are tasteless, or have all, *soubise*, *ravigote*, *béchamel*, precisely the same flavour ; he is so inconceivably careless that he sends up hairs in the gravy, or suffers the pastry-maid to drop a hairpin into the cabinet-pudding.

Members constantly back their bills with scathing remarks, and one, with more than usually fastidious palate, has been known to assert boldly that there

is not a single man on the committee who ever sat down to a decent dinner in his life. The tradesmen's supplies are roundly abused ; the meat is of the coarsest and commonest, the fish flabby, the poult erer is permitted to supply gulls' for plovers' eggs. It is the same, or worse, with regard to the management of the cellar, the purchase of and laying down of wines. If the committee elects to depend upon the wine merchants, and buy in small quantities from time to time, it is called unworthy of the traditions of a great club ; if the club keeps up a cellar, facing the risk of deterioration in a large stock, or a change in taste that makes a particular wine so much dead money, no excuse is accepted for the inevitable loss entailed. One famous establishment not long since disposed of some hundreds of dozens of vintage clarets—high-class Clos Vougeot, Lafitte, Mouton Rothschild, and the rest—for a mere song, because they were no longer in demand for after-dinner drinking, on account of the hunger so universally displayed for tobacco. Yet again, when a certain brand of champagne failed for some occult reason to win popularity, it was offered for removal by members at the price of ginger beer, and the fortunate purchasers obtained a wine which presently so improved by keeping as to rank with the best. No *amende* was made to the sagacious members of the wine sub-committee who had bought it originally.

The committee must expect to be taken sharply to task on larger issues, and to justify the course it adopts in the administration of the club's affairs. It must be neither too laggard nor too go-ahead in its treatment of the many developments that make for the increased comfort and convenience of daily life. We have become so familiar with electric light that we are apt to forget the fierce controversies that once raged in Clubland over its introduction. Time was when the average member utterly scouted such new-fangled notions ; the installation would be ruinously costly, the light was unpleasant and injurious to the eyes, it could never compare with wax candles, which, indeed, some old-fashioned and most luxurious clubs still retain. There is at least one eminently respectable and slow-moving club that will not tolerate a telephone, even to this day, declining, not without good reason perhaps, to accept the advantages it offers as a sufficient set-off against the intrusion upon privacy, and the irritating disturbance it may introduce into the peace and quiet of the club. Most clubs fought shy of passenger lifts and some still refuse to introduce them. Committees had to choose between accepting the movement or resisting it and in either decision to be prepared to incur much odium. Its attitude towards the other burning questions that crop up continually is very closely watched and may bring down upon it severe animadversion. Say the club is of the

old exclusive class which strictly ostracises strangers ; when some pestilent reformers desire to revise the time-honoured rule, the side taken by the committee is of paramount importance, and its vote will probably settle the question either way. So again, when a radical measure is mooted, such as the extension of the privilege of smoking, to permit it in more rooms, even in the coffee-room after dinner, following the now very general practice in society, the committee is urgently called upon to rise to the situation by the advanced party, and no less strenuously to put its foot down firmly by the conservative side.

The most curious feature in club ethics is the aloofness or detachment of its members, generally, from the conduct of its concerns ; they throw all responsibility upon the committee, and claim only to find fault. Ever sparing of thanks, ever prodigal of blame, they outdo a Parliamentary constituency in calling their elected representatives to account. To attend the annual general meeting in troublous times when party feeling runs high is the best proof of this. It might be a company meeting, where a board of defaulting directors has to face, and if possible conciliate, a body of indignant shareholders ; or the committee might be a handful of incompetent employés who have not earned their salaries, and are being called upon to give an account of their neglected stewardship. No one would imagine that the members of the committee possessed equal

rights with their fellows, an equal status, equal, if not keener, desire for the good of the commonweal. It is ludicrous—pitiable even—to note how petty and contemptible are the grounds for “heckling” the public-spirited men, who have taken upon themselves gratuitously the performance of an arduous, irksome, and too often ill-requited task. The whole room will rage over unimportant items in the accounts; the excessive wastage in toothpicks, the wages of the boy who cleans the boots in the basement. Portentous warnings are uttered of the certain end of such extravagance. Unless the strictest economy is applied, expenditure will soon exceed income, and blue ruin will stare the club in the face. This is the opportunity for the members of the opposition, and the cantankerous creatures with an abiding quarrel with the management, and a still more conceited and consuming desire to show themselves off at their best. One prides himself upon being a high-class financier, another is a heaven-born orator with a resonant voice, which he loves to hear; he is of aggressive spirit and wants always to “know why” in the best interests of the club, which he wishes to protect and see properly administered. It is because the club, although it laughs at his diatribes, will have nothing to do with him, that he is so unsparing in his invective; he has probably been blackballed for the committee repeatedly, but still hopes to have a finger in the pie. His chance comes when the

chairman and his colleagues, goaded beyond endurance, resign in a body, and the club must be carried on by the trustees or the secretary until a new committee can be elected. Even then the chief malcontents may fail to come in ; the club is smitten with remorse at the ungenerous treatment of its true friends, and, unwilling to trust to the tender mercies of the Philistines, proceeds to give a renewed vote of confidence in the old committee at the ballot boxes. This is an admission that it has been well served ; not the less does the club continue to gird and grumble.

CHAPTER X

CLUB HABITUÉS

CLUBMEN AND CLUBWOMEN—TASTES AND IDIOSYNCRASIES—
SELFISHNESS—JEALOUSY OF NAME—PRIVACY—ECCENTRICS—
CLUB LUNATICS—BORES.

SOME are born to club life, some achieve it, many have it thrust upon them. The gregarious instinct is overmastering in the first-named. To be alone is abhorrent to them ; they must consort with their fellows, see them, talk with them, eat, drink, pass many hours with them. Indeed the desire for congregate existence is the leading principle in all clubs. Your determined clubman is lost when the particular house he favours closes its doors, even temporarily ; to be exiled from his happy home by some catastrophe—bankruptcy, beggary, or a serious breach of the rules—is a possible penalty of the most terrifying kind, ever contributing to keep him straight. In dull seasons, when the club empties, he wanders through it wretched and lonely, seeking the companionship he cannot find, and he is reduced to conversing with the servants ; he hangs upon the lips of the wine-steward, or exchanges confidences with the cashier.

Another class of clubmen has been brought to appreciate its joys more slowly ; they grow into it gradually, but it suits them surprisingly well. If they are ever introspective or retrospective, they wonder how they could have existed before they joined a club. The best of everything is at their disposal ; material comforts and intellectual delights of the sort that appeal to them. The pleasures of the table are within easy reach ; choice fare prepared by a *chef* who, with a more or less violent stretch of imagination, is supposed to pass as a *cordon bleu* ; wines of the finest vintages, if they are content to accept the committee's selection, have been laid down for them, offering the widest choice of drinks, and their perpetual absorption, if that way inclined. They will find some eager antagonist at chess ready to while away the empty hours, or they can haunt the billiard-room to play or look on with unflagging interest, or they can live in the card-room from morning till night, and enlist among the many fanatical votaries of "bridge."

If they hanker after gossip and the talk of the town, they can be supplied with the earliest, the raciest, if not exactly the most authentic news : the latest scandal, emphasised and rounded off as it flies ; the last *bon histoire*, that has travelled west from the Stock Exchange, the source and origin of most.

There remains the third category of those who are driven to frequent a club constantly, not because

they like it, but because they cannot help themselves. They are mostly bachelors, widowers (actual, potential, or temporary), single men, who for the moment have no home of their own, and must be satisfied with the two-thousandth part or share in this great caravanserai. We might be disposed to envy them ; but our views change when chance or design brings us to become one of the melancholy band. It is a common fallacy, that he is happiest whose hat covers all his responsibilities. A life self-centred, without close family ties, without duties and the affections of one's own belongings, becomes an intolerable burden some day, and entails an inevitable nemesis. Existence drags on in a dreary, monotonous round, unchequered perhaps by great sorrows, but barren of sunshine and solace ; and the miserable end comes after an unintended, uncompassionated illness, when the landlady of a lodging round the corner closes the defunct clubman's eyes.

Within these grand divisions the club *habitué* is encountered, in many distinctly marked varieties. He is sociable or solitary ; a dandy in dress, or most neglectful of his personal appearance ; careless in his habits, or most punctilious and methodical ; he is cross-gained, or affable, too much so, perhaps ; he is mean and penuriously inclined, or extravagant and ostentatious ; a busybody, keenly concerned with other people's affairs, censorious, inquisitorial and interfering ; he may be an incurable egoist, wholly

wrapped up in his own affairs, or large-minded, soft-hearted, an easy prey to the designing, but often a good Samaritan in the higher sense, with purse and influence freely at the disposal of a needy friend. His sociability is rather particular than general ; it is to be seen in his preference for a small coterie of intimates with whom he chiefly associates. There are many such inner gatherings of the few among the larger crowd of the members, half a dozen or so who are always together at table, round the fire in the morning-room, or in some snug corner of the smoking-room whence they look askance at all outsiders. On the other hand, the solitary member is no less wedded to his own ways ; he eats alone in some secluded corner, and reads steadily through the meal, a newspaper or a book (if the rules will allow him) ; he spends half his day in the library, or at an out-of-the-way writing-table, where he deals with a voluminous correspondence or corrects proofs or makes entries in diaries, the other half of the day being for the most part devoted to constitutional walks through the streets or round and round Hyde Park. He is usually of a literary turn, but his fondness for the library is not a little because it is a “silent” room, and he knows he cannot be addressed there or beguiled into conversation by the ubiquitous bore.

In external aspect your clubmen exhibit many differences and peculiarities. Certain unwritten laws

as to dress prevail nowadays in most good clubs and have a general binding effect; one is the now nearly universal custom of sitting down to dinner in evening dress. Few ignore the rule except for recognised reasons, such as the hurried meal snatched on the eve of a journey, or the dinner swallowed immediately, with the knowledge that it may be interrupted at any moment by the division bell. Great freedom is permitted us to-day in matters of costume. The old obligation to appear in tall hat and frock coat has been quite set at defiance; the straws and Panamas may be counted by dozens on the hat pegs and in the halls, and "dittoes" are always used by the early arrivals for breakfast, indeed during the rest of the day till dinner. Liberty degenerates sometimes into licence, and members may be met with, even in the best clubs, whose clothes and general turn-out expose them on occasion to animadversion, even to the protest and censure of the committee. Excuses may be made for them: approaching senility, *insouciance*, utter forgetfulness and absent-mindedness may be pleaded in extenuation, seldom poverty or want of brains; for a pauper cannot afford to dress badly, and a fool is not brave enough. That seedy-looking old gentleman with ragged tie and slipshod boots, which he does not hesitate to put up on the sofa, is really a distinguished *savant*; and the other, in the mis-shaped gaberdine and trouser-edges frayed over the

boots, is a twice-told millionaire, who could buy up half the club.

A trait strongly developed in the club *habitué* is his sense of personal—it might also be said exclusive—ownership. He is apt to think that the place is run for his peculiar benefit, and that, as he uses it so much, he has a claim to the best of it, that his fads and fancies should be primarily and most attentively considered. Some carry this pretension so far that they would monopolise the accommodation that pleases them most : they expect to have the same table reserved for them always, in some favourite place ; in summer by the window, in winter by the fireside ; and this day after day for years. They have their special armchairs in the morning-room and smoking-room, they take possession of their particular newspapers, several probably at the same time, and sit on those they do not want for the moment, or go to sleep with them in their hand. This determined egoism might grow into a grievous nuisance, were it not constantly combated and corrected by the always strong socialistic element in a club, that which will tolerate no distinctions between members, will allow no one to have the smallest advantage over the other, a sentiment that finds expression in the rule absolutely forbidding “tips” to the club servants, or in an indignant letter of complaint to the committee that some member, in business, has

taken possession of the telephone for several consecutive hours.

Public opinion is powerful, and it would undoubtedly be ranged on their side, if the offenders against club usage ventured to object. Members are very tenacious, not merely of their privileges, but of their good name. Strict censors are ever on the watch for anything in the conduct of one of their body which might indirectly, but still injuriously, affect the characters of the whole number. Club men are not too strait-laced, and may wink at minor peccadilloes ; but they will allow nothing dishonourable to pass unchecked and unpunished, whether it has happened within the walls of the club-house or beyond them. A public scandal will, if possible, be avoided, and will generally be prevented under the rules. A culprit, whose wrong-doing rests upon pretty clear evidence, will rather take a strong hint to retire than face the ordeal of an extraordinary general meeting especially summoned to deal with him. Happily such extreme action is rare in good clubs and among those who most frequent them.

The old and much-quoted proverb, that "One half of the world hardly knows how the other lives," is perfectly true of a club, notwithstanding the seeming intimacy and close daily intercourse between members. There is little intrusion upon private affairs—a man's life, his ways, his means,

belongings, whatever appertains to him outside the club, are his own, and unless he speaks of them himself his confidence is never forced. He may be in grievous trouble, on the verge of divorce proceedings for or against him ; he may have just run away with somebody's wife, or somebody may have done him the same kindness or injury ; his affairs may have become seriously mixed, and ruin impend over him ; yet he may be sure that no one will seek to raise the veil, if he does not do it of his own accord. What though oppressed in secret with such penury that he cannot afford to enter the coffee-room, where ready money is the invariable rule ; it is never remarked upon, save when some kindly Amphitryon insists upon giving him a square meal, or takes a quiet opportunity of slipping a five-pound note into his hand. The straits to which club men may be reduced may be seen in the nefarious practices to which, literally, they have been known to descend. When poor devils stoop to purloining the club notepaper, the pens, soap, whatever is portable, even the plate—and such things have been—we are more impressed by the irony of it than the shame. Our thoughts are carried from the luxury and splendour of the great club that owns these unworthy members, to the squalid home in the suburbs, where these ill-gotten supplies form a welcome addition to its stores.

The humours and eccentricities of the individual

are perhaps more strikingly observable in a club than in any other gathering of people. The ways of particular members, their habits, tastes, foibles, will be thrown up into strong relief, where existence is congregate and life public. We may know little of a man's private affairs, what his income is exactly, or even approximately, or how he earns it ; what he does, indeed, "by daylight," as the saying goes ; whether he is married, or has been, or separated, or lives *maritalelement* ; whether he owns a palatial mansion, or is satisfied with a modest bedroom in some shady corner of Clubland. But the manner in which he personally comports himself, his demeanour and conduct, his dress and appearance, the opinion he holds and proclaims, are matters of general knowledge, the better and more widely appreciated the more strongly pronounced and peculiar. Many exhibit no more than the milder forms of eccentricity, quaint traits a little out of the common, but sufficiently marked to win them good-humoured but depreciatory criticism. "Rum chap," we murmur pityingly, recognising that the same may be said of ourselves, and that numbers are in the same boat. A few, however, are more distinctly "dotty" ; palpably maniacs, men whose mental deficiencies amount to aberration of intellect and positive lunacy. Every club owns one or two members who might at any time be certified as insane if it was worth the trouble, or indeed, requisite, so as to secure the

general comfort, and afford protection to the whole body. As a rule they are harmless ; only now and again do they occasion serious inconvenience, or become really dangerous.

A very marked and notable case is recorded in the tradition of one well-known club. A member, who had been long out of sight, re-appeared in what had once been his favourite haunt, and without eliciting special comment ; for men may come and men may go, but the club flows on for ever, un-ruffled and unconcerned. He was hailed with the usual careless greeting : " Halloa ! Not seen you lately," or some more callous, heartless wretch may add : " We thought you were dead." Here the unfortunate absentee had only been laid by in a living tomb. He had been under restraint, from which he had succeeded in escaping, and had now come up to London and walked straight into his club. While waiting for the lunch he forthwith ordered, he called loudly for a bowl of ice, and proceeded to pile the pieces upon the convex top of his bald crown, from which they rolled down continually on to his own and the neighbouring tables. Meanwhile, he glared fiercely at the servants and condemned them in wild, truculent terms ; when at last he demanded a carving-knife to eat his oysters with, he had to find it for himself, as no one dared approach him. A special messenger was promptly despatched to Scotland Yard ; but the police inspector

who came in answer to the summons declared that he was unable to act, for the troublesome member was actually in his own house, the club being to all intents and purposes his private residence. A hasty conference was held, a couple of magistrates and two doctors were sought out and invited to sign an order for removal to an asylum, but hesitated to take the responsibility, and the lunatic remained master of the situation. He had the coffee-room to himself and ranged to and fro furiously, brandishing the carving-knife, while the terrified servants stared at him from the doors. In the end he walked out unmolested into the street, where he fell into the clutches of a keeper who had come in search of him.

Another club possessed a tamer and more inoffensive lunatic, whose craze was to walk perpetually up and down stairs. The moment he came in of a morning and had put away his hat and umbrella, he started for the top floor, ascending with a set, purposeful air, as though he had important business in the card-room or billiard-room, or upper smoking-room, which he had completely forgotten when he arrived ; and, striking his forehead with the absent-minded despair of a short memory, he would turn on his heel and run down again quickly. At the bottom it was *de capo*, a fresh journey upstairs joyously, as one who has caught a missing clue, which once more eluded him on the higher levels ;

then came another fruitless descent, and so on interminably. The installation of a lift was at first a sore trial to this inveterate climber ; he continued to view it with profound distrust until, with increasing infirmity, he discovered its value, and then he became objectionable to his fellow-members by his excessive use of it. Extreme suspicion and undying distrust, not to say hatred, of certain persons and things characterised another clubman. Once, when enjoying the hospitality of another club at the cleaning and closing season, he was seized with a rooted conviction that his umbrella had been deliberately stolen, and proceeded at once to take the law into his own hands. He brought a detective into the house, where he was only a guest, and was making a systematic search of the racks and stands, when he was expostulated with, and his conduct all but caused strained relations between the two committees. He had two pet enemies—one his own committee, and the other the Napoleonic dynasty. The first he denounced unsparingly, in season and out of season and on every possible occasion, and particularly in regard to the second. It so happened that the club had become possessed of certain relics associated with the first Napoleon—portraits, medallions, a fine piece of tapestry. This was an outrage ; it was unpatriotic and inexcusable that a London club should attach any value to articles that had once belonged to the implacable foe of England. It was

all the fault of the committee, and for this and other *lâches* he continually sought to arraign and impeach it.

Many milder forms of eccentricity are to be met with. The man whose affection for his club is so keen that he would never willingly leave it, who is the first to enter it and is on the doorstep before it opens, having, as some of the servants presumed, roosted in the trees of a neighbouring square, and who is the last to leave it, but does not object to pay the swinging fines imposed for remaining after the regular hours. He would like to sleep in it, and often does in that commonly accepted dormitory, the library, with its books and easy chairs inviting to slumber. The methodical member again who lives by precise rule, who likes to sit at the same table, eat the same food day after day, who starts for his walking exercise at the same hour and walks exactly the same distance. He lights a cigar at the same hour, and when the clock strikes four, or as he may have settled it, turns homeward without fail.

There is the economical eccentric, who has the club prices by heart, and knows how to get the most food for the least money ; he has solved to his own satisfaction all the intricate problems of values, the exact quantities supplied in half-portions, how he can escape the charge for table-money, and what he can get out of it, if he must pay, when he can

expand "tea" into a substantial meal by the cunning addition of sandwiches and buttered toast. Another eccentric's life is centred in his dog, and he can so little bear to be separated from him that he brings him to the club and chains him to the steps, regardless of the protests of members unhappy about their heels. One form of eccentricity is the always recurrent objection to pay annual subscriptions until the last possible moment, and even later, and until the usual pains and penalties are threatened and, it may be, enforced. These defaulting members will neglect other lawful charges, and allow their dinner and luncheon bills to fall into arrears, an intolerable practice in every well-ordered club. To defy unwritten rules of conduct and procedure commends itself to some, who like to be thought original ; they will wear their hats at table and positively decline to dine in evening clothes ; they love to talk in rooms where "silence" is ordained, and to smoke in halls and passages where it is not usually allowed.

"Let us go home," said Canning once, "the bores are about the streets." It is not so easy to escape them when they infest one's other home, one's favourite club, except by sacrificing its comforts and privileges and avoiding the house. The bore remains in possession and is free to victimise his unfortunate fellow-members who attempt to hold their ground. His name is legion, his

methods various, but always persistent ; the attack may be patiently and assiduously prepared ; he has waited for you round the corner, watched you furtively till he finds you helpless, with your retreat cut off and quite at his mercy ; or he may swoop down aggressively, determined to inflict his company upon you, fondly believing in his conceit he is doing you an inestimable kindness and great honour. He is generally too thick-skinned to appreciate a rebuff : he seldom understands the plainest snub ; he has not the tact to see that the subjects upon which he perpetually descants are seldom those that interest you, that his views do not always harmonise with yours, and are too often about himself and his own affairs. The wonder is that the body of members do not rise *en masse* to cast out their persecutors. Probably no movement would be more popular in a club than an association for the extinction of bores. The chief objection to such a beneficent movement would be that it might seriously deplete the number of members in the club.

Let us pass from the general to the particular and examine the various types of bore more in detail. Prominent among them is the political bore, the willing slave of party, and the close student of its history, who has mastered dry facts and figures and pours them out upon you with wearisome prolixity and irritating wrongheadedness. Another

trial is the financial bore ; he is at his worst when he has dabbled in stocks and shares to his own undoing, when he lost on a " deal " and bemoans his ill-luck with maddening iteration. This one is equally offensive when buoyed up with the hopes of " making a hit," and he will descant at length on the extraordinary insight he possesses, harping continually on the vicissitudes of the markets. Woe to you if you have ever sought his advice on speculation or investment ; you have offered yourself as a sacrifice and must bear with his reproaches for not doing as he said, or doing more, or not enough, all with urgent entreaties to do something now.

The man with a grievance is a colossal bore. He flourishes with rankest growth in the Service clubs, and will wax interminably eloquent over his ill-treatment, enlarging upon promotion withheld, or retirement enforced, or moneys surcharged on the interpretation of regulations to his detriment ; boring you in all manner of obscure ways, too often unintelligible to the non-professional listener. As a soldier or sailor he is naturally bellicose ; threats garnished with strong language overlie his talk ; he is " not going to stand it " ; he will bring it before the House and into the courts ; " it's a scandal and a downright robbery." When he goes on to ask you if you know the exact facts of the case, or seeks to read you the correspondence, or to suggest that you should draft his next letter,

you had better take to your heels and seek the next train, *en route* to the Continent, or further.

The valetudinarian bore is one to be carefully avoided and eschewed. Most men qualify for this category when they embark upon their own ailments. Do not, if you are wise, inquire after any man's health or suggest that he has not been seen of late at the club. "Haven't you heard?" he will answer in high dudgeon. "Why I have been at death's door; began with damp feet and ended in appendicitis; two operations, you know; only just about again. I shall never be the same man." This is the text of a theme to be continued at our next meeting, with variations and new features, new symptoms, new forms of treatment, new medicines, new doctors, until you almost hope that his malady may take a fatal turn. Who has not met the literary bore, who scowls at you if you are not intimately acquainted with all the books he has written, and sets you right peremptorily as to your choice of reading, and strongly recommends dull works you have already tabooed? Or the reminiscent bore, or the bore who has long been an absentee and is curiously inquisitive about people who no longer interest you, and past events you would much rather leave in the limbo of Lethe? The unobservant and tactless bore again, who settles down for a long talk at the wrong moment, quite regardless of your plainest hint that you have to

be moving on. The plea of an urgent appointment, a call at the telephone, letters to write, nothing will release you from the thrall of this ancient mariner, nothing but direct rudeness for which you are fiercely upbraided when he catches you again. This type of bore becomes intolerable when egotistical, when his talk is of himself and his doings through the long lapse of years since last you met. How he has made a fortune and swaggers about it ostentatiously ; or lost one, and, being frankly a pauper, lays himself out obviously for commiseration and help, the very present help of a loan in cash or getting an old pal something to do.

Club bores have often their peculiar ways and habitats, their favourite haunts, which they infest to the annoyance of their long-suffering fellows. A most hateful bore is the coffee-room *habitué*, one who lies in wait for you to offer his companionship at table, when, if you weakly yield, he inflicts his platitudes on you throughout the meal ; or if he has failed to secure a victim to sit with or beside him, he leaves his place to make the round of all the room to pass the time of day to all his acquaintances in turn, standing over them to talk endlessly and destroy his victim's comfort in eating and power of digesting food. There is a bore who frequents the library, where he defies the strict rule of silence and engages you in long conversation about the merits of the books he never reads, or

seeks guidance as to the authorities in which he will find facts that may interest him presumably, but certainly no one else. The library bore is least offensive when he is sound asleep and snoring ; but that too is an offence, and he becomes a pestilent nuisance when he deals with the place as a dormitory. The smoking-room bore is the most unavoidable ; he occupies a point of great vantage, for most members come within reach of his influence, and he is as cunning as any spider in weaving his web in some snug corner, where there is no draught and the easiest chairs, and in which the helpless fly is caught and held, sometimes till the small hours of the morning. The racing-man may develop into a portentous bore. It is not merely that his talk is entirely of the coming events and handicaps, with endless quotations from "Ruff," but he monopolises the "tape," and organises a "ring" in the morning-room or entrance-hall, where he and his fellows lay and take odds, and convert the club into a betting-place within the meaning of the Act. This bore shares with the financial and the gossiping bore hungry for social news, the reprehensible practice of grabbing at half a dozen papers at the same time, to the inconvenience of other members, who are told by the waiter that some particular paper is "in hand." The newspaper bore is an ever-present cause of annoyance, and especially so when he drops off in a sound sleep in possession of some much-coveted

journal, by sitting on it or holding it in his hand. A worse bore is the book-lover, who defies the rules of the club by secretly abstracting from the library some volume in which he is so deeply interested that he carries it off to his home. Lesser offenders have been known to hide the book in the hanging curtain or other private receptacle.

CHAPTER XI

PLAY AT CLUBS

RAGE FOR GAMBLING IN PAST TIMES—CLUBS WERE PRACTICALLY “HELLS”—WHITE’S, COCOA TREE, ALMACK’S, BROOKS’—RECKLESS PLAYERS—GAMES OF CHANCE GRADUALLY TABOOED—FARO—BASSET—HAZARD—WHIST.

IT has been commonly stated that the rage for gambling at the London clubs began at the latter part of the eighteenth century. But it prevailed very extensively at a much earlier date. We have the authority of Hogarth’s “Rake’s Progress,” plate IV., showing “White’s” signboard, and distinctly satirising the passion for play. This picture was begun before the date of the fire at White’s, which certainly occurred in 1733. Play was, in fact, universal at this period. The King and the Royal Family gambled at Court; there was play in every fashionable drawing-room as well as in the lowest dens of the Metropolis. Men played everywhere, the highest and the lowest, and especially those whom idleness habitually tempted to seek excitement and to risk their possessions, on the altars of Chance. Authentic records exist to show that in 1750 White’s house was no better than a

hell. Gentlemen of the finest quality were practically professed gamesters, if they were no worse, but there were those who did not hesitate to characterise the club as a nest of infamous sharpers. Dean Swift wrote : “ The late Earl of Orford, when minister, never passed by White’s Chocolate-House (the common rendezvous of sharpers and noble cullies) without bestowing a curse upon that famous academy as the bane of half the English Nobility.”

It was a gaming-house, to which professional players readily gained admission and were welcomed, for the purpose of holding the bank at hazard and faro. They betted there on everything conceivable, as the old betting-book, still preserved, plainly shows. They laid wagers on prospective births, deaths, and marriages ; the honours, expected by political placemen ; the result of the latest scandal. One entry runs : “ Lord Mountford bets Sir James Bland that Nash outlives Cibber.” He won because Cibber when eighty-four died in 1757 and Nash lived till 1761. Walpole wrote to Sir Horace Mann : “ There is a man about town, Sir William Burdett, a man of very good family but most infamous character. . . and a wager in White’s betting-book bets that the first baronet that will be hanged is this Sir William Burdett.”

The Cocoa Tree Club, converted, as has been said, from the old Tory Chocolate-House in 1746 or before, ran White’s close as the gamesters’ home.

Again quoting Walpole in 1780, he says: "There has been a cast at hazard at the Cocoa Tree, the difference of which amounted to one hundred and four score thousand pounds (£180,000). Mr. O'Birne, an Irish gamester, had won one hundred thousand pounds of a young Mr. Harvey, of Chigwell, just started into an estate by his elder brother's death. O'Birne said: 'You can never pay me.' 'I can,' said the youth; 'my estate will sell for the debt.' 'No,' said O'Birne; 'I will win ten thousand, and you shall throw me for the odd ninety thousand.' They did and Harvey won."

In 1674 Almack's, started in direct competition with White's, soon became notorious for its high play. "The young men of the age," wrote Horace Walpole, "lost ten, fifteen, twenty thousand pounds a night there." It was the rule to stake specie, and ordered that every player should keep not less than twenty to fifty guineas on the table in front of him. There was often as much as ten thousand pounds in gold on the table. The gamesters began by removing their embroidered clothes and substituting frieze great-coats, or they turned their coats inside out for luck. They put on short leather sleeves to save their lace ruffles, and to guard their eyes from the light and keep their hair in order they wore high-crowned straw hats, with broad brims adorned with flowers and ribbons, and to conceal their emotions also wore masks. Each player had at

his hand a small neat stand to carry his tea, and a wooden bowl to hold the rouleaux of guineas.

Almack's passed presently into the hands of Brooks', and was thus the parent of that more distinguished or still more notorious club. But the original Almack's continued as Goosetree's, and was largely patronised by great people and great players, especially by Pitt and his personal adherents, who numbered some five-and-twenty. It is recorded by Pitt that he played with intense eagerness at Goosetree's, although he was never carried away by the passion for it. Pitt was also a member of the new Brooks', taken there by Fox in triumph after his brilliant maiden speech, and elected by acclamation. His reception was most flattering, but, as Wraxall tells us, he was not dazzled by it. Fox himself soon perceived the coldness of this new ally, for whom play had no attraction, and who beheld a faro bank without emotion. It is a fact that Pitt remained during several years a member of Brooks', but he rarely, if ever, appeared there after he came into office. He was presently elected to White's, a few months before he became Chancellor of the Exchequer. As he had by this time fallen out with the Whigs, Fox seceded from White's, and began to frequent Brooks' exclusively, where he surrounded himself with the chief members of the opposition. White's with Pitt became the rallying-place of the Court party. The rivalry between the two houses

ran high and each became the headquarters of its own faction. When the Prince of Wales came to man's estate and took his place as the leader of society, he chose Fox as his friend and adviser, and lent himself to the party hostile to the King. It is beyond our province to touch further upon the political dissensions of the period, except to repeat that they brought about a strong antagonism between the two leading clubs of the day.¹

George Selwyn, the famous wit, whose taste took him to every execution, and who yet loved all children passionately, was an ardent votary of chance. He played at White's and when he found it offered him better opportunities he went over to Almack's, and then to Brooks'. He played high, although not extravagantly, and when he won, it was not always promptly paid. Nor could he always meet his engagements. There is a letter extant from the Lord Derby of the time, to the effect that "having lost a very enormous sum of money last night, and finding myself under the necessity of entreating your goodness to excuse the liberty I am taking in applying to you for assistance. If it is not very inconvenient to you, I should be glad of the money you owe me. If not, I must pay what I can, and desire Brooks' to trust me for the remainder." On the other hand, General Fitzpatrick, who received a similar reminder from Selwyn, pleads that he was

¹ See ante, p. 50.

heavily in debt in "Brooks' book," and expected to be inundated with clamorous creditors at Christmas.

A very prominent and reckless player at White's in the first half of the eighteenth century was the Lord Mountford mentioned elsewhere. He is described by Horace Walpole as "good-natured and affable, with the most compendious understanding," but he was wasteful and extravagant to the last degree. He played chiefly at hazard at which he lost vast sums, but he was fond of whist and indeed all games. There are sixty wagers of his, recorded in White's betting-book, amounting to a total of five hundred guineas. The climax of his bad luck was in the loss of two annuities on the same day, by the deaths of the Earl of Albemarle and Lord Gage. He tried hard to retrieve his position by seeking a Government appointment, and asked the Duke of Newcastle for either the Governorship of Virginia or the Mastership of the Royal Hounds. He got neither, and prepared at once to end his difficulties by suicide. He appears to have inquired of several friends as to the easiest mode of ending life and, having made up his mind, passed his last night at White's (New Year's Eve), supped there, and played whist till one in the morning. The next morning he sent for his lawyer to bring his will, which he executed, asking pointedly if it would hold good if a man shot himself. On receiving an assurance that it

would not be invalidated, he went into the next room and performed the happy despatch.

One of those rare freaks in life, in fortune the lucky gamester, was Major-General John Scott of Balcombe, "a man of wonderful good luck," as he has been styled, and his career was that of "a notorious gambler, who acquired numerous estates in his winnings." He is supposed to have won from first to last £200,000 at White's Club, and was deemed at his death to be the wealthiest commoner in Scotland. He resided in a beautiful house in Edinburgh, called Belle Vue, which he won off Sir Laurence Dundas, who in a bout with the General, having lost all his cash, staked the house he had just had built against £30,000. Scott won, but agreed to have another house built on purpose for him, and this was the origin of Belle Vue. When playing one night Scott was informed that a daughter had been born to him, and he announced that he must double his stakes to secure a fortune for his girl. He at first lost heavily, but when rallied thereon, the General, "who had an evenness of temper nothing could warp, and a judgment of play superior to most," replied "that it would all come right in the end." By daybreak he had recovered his losses and was £15,000 to the good. In a contemporary letter it is stated that General Scott played very fairly, but so much upon system that it was believed he drank nothing but water to keep his head perfectly cool. His dinner

before play was very frugal, often a boiled chicken washed down with toast and water. Scott died in 1775.

A lucky and very prominent player of the period was Francis, afterwards Sir Philip Francis, commonly supposed to be the author of the "Letters of Junius." He held an appointment in Calcutta, where play ran riot, and made such a business of it that he was extraordinarily successful. It was rumoured that his gains at whist amounted to £30,000, and that he became independent in March 1766, by one large *coup*; and he was enabled to retire to England with a competence. He frequented Brooks' and was noted there for his bitter tongue, the outcome of that pungent satire, which made the letters supposed to be the product of his pen so notorious. Other great players were the two Smiths, father and son, the first a retired Major-General of the Indian Army, who had brought home £150,000 and was nicknamed "Hyder Ali" in London Society. The second was appropriately called "Tippoo," and was reported to be the best whist player of his day.

Games of pure chance were ever the most popular in the clubs, more especially faro, which has been called the offspring of basset and hazard, and is described in "The Complete Gamester" (1739) as "certainly the most bewitching game that is played with dice; for when a man begins to play he knows not when to leave off; and having once accustomed

himself to it he hardly ever plays anything else." It is noteworthy that both basset and faro when most in vogue in England had been forbidden in France. At the same time those games were actually illegal in England, having been (nominally) suppressed by Act of Parliament in 1739. In 1745 a bill to prevent the excessive and dreadful vice of gaming was before the Lords. Information was laid that Baroness Mornington claimed privilege as a peeress against process for keeping a common gambling-house and it was disallowed by the House of Lords. On March 17th, 1797, Lady Buckinghamshire, with Lady E. Luttrell and Mrs. Sturt, were convicted at the Bow Street Police Court in the penalty of £750 for playing at the game of faro, and Henry Martindale was convicted in the sum of £200 for keeping the faro bank at Lady Buckinghamshire's.

"The chief charm of faro was that it was easy to learn, that it appeared to be very fair, and lastly that it was a quiet game."¹ It was played with an entire pack of fifty-two cards and was played by any number of punters on the one side and a banker on the other. The whole of the cards of the pack were exposed upon the table ; the banker had another pack in front of him from which he drew cards, one for himself which he placed on the right, and a second for the players which was placed on the left, and styled the *Carte Anglaise* or English card. The banker

¹ Steinmetz, "Gaming Table," II., p. 312.

won all the money on the cards similar to that placed on his right, and had to pay double the stakes if the punters had spotted the card on the left. As the banker's pack diminished the odds increased in his favour, and from being four per cent. at first gradually rose to fifteen per cent. It was calculated that the expense of a faro bank amounted to £1,000 a year, which included rent, servants, suppers, and so forth. But faro tables were kept at the clubs by members, principally at Brooks'. They were forbidden at White's, on account of the success achieved by Lord Robert Spencer and General Fitzpatrick at the other club. These last named, when at the very ebb of their fortunes, raised sufficient to start a faro bank at Brooks', and, having met with no opposition from the members, carried out their intention and achieved a most remarkable success. The bank won, as banks generally do, and Lord Robert pocketed as his share of the profits £100,000, after which he foreswore all play and retired into private life.

Long before faro came in card-playing was the fashion in England, and people played at the theatre, before the curtain went up and between the acts. Primero, a Spanish game, was the rage at Court when Philip II. married Queen Mary, and was succeeded by "maw," the favourite game of James I. Then came "ombre," brought over by Catherine of Braganza, Queen of Charles II., also a Spanish game, properly called *El Hombre*, "the man," because it

required in the highest degree thought and reflection, qualities considered peculiarly characteristic of man. The most expert player was likely to make mistakes, if he thought of anything else or attended to any outside talk. It was a game of three players with forty cards, the eight, nine, and ten of all the suits being discarded.

Basset, was an Italian game, brought over by Cardinal Mazarin to France, where Louis XIV. lost large sums at it. It was the precursor of faro, and an intricate game very much in the favour of the banker, who had the sole disposal of the first and last cards, and many privileges in dealing. Public edict in France when basset was paramount reserved the profitable post of banker to the sons of noblemen. When the banker or tallier (teller?) turned up the first card he took half the stake of every punter who had betted on any card of that sort. The last card turned up belonged to the dealer, and even if the players had one of the same cards they could do nothing with it. Basset did not make much way in this country, and ombre continued to be the fashionable game through the first quarter of the eighteenth century.

Hazard is the most gambling of all games of chance. It has been thus described in an early number of the *Pall Mall Gazette* dated for September 3, 1869: "The players assemble round a circular table, a space being reserved for the 'groom-porter,'

who occupies a somewhat elevated position, and whose duty it is to call the odds and see that the game is played correctly. Whoever takes the box and dice places in the centre of the table as much money as he wishes to risk, which is at once covered with an equal amount, either by some individual speculator or by the contributions of several. The player (technically called the 'caster') then proceeds to call a 'main.' There are several 'mains' on the dice, namely, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9; of these he mentally selects that one which either chance or superstition may suggest, calls it aloud, shakes the box, and delivers the dice. If he throws the exact number he called, he 'nicks' it and wins; if he throws any other number (with a few exceptions which will be mentioned) he neither wins nor loses. The number, however, which he thus throws becomes his 'chance,' and if he can succeed in repeating it before he throws what was his main he wins, if not, he loses. In other words, having completely failed to throw his main in the first instance he should lose, but does not, in consequence of the equitable interference of his newly made acquaintance, which constitutes itself his chance. For example, suppose the caster 'sets'—that is, places on the table—a stake of £10 and it is covered by an equal amount, he then calls 7 as his main and gives 5; the groom-porter at once calls aloud '5 to 7,' that means 5 is the number

to win and 7 the number to lose, and the player continues throwing until the event is determined by the turning of either the 'main' or the 'chance.' During this time, however, a most important feature in the game comes into operation —the laying and taking of the odds caused by the relative proportions of the 'main' and 'chance.' These, as has been said, are calculated with mathematical nicety, are proclaimed by the groom-porter, and are never varied. In the above instance, as the caster stands to win with 5 and to lose with 7, the odds are declared to be three to two against him, inasmuch as there are three ways of throwing 7, and only two of throwing 5. As soon as the odds are declared, the caster may increase his stake, by any sum he wishes, and the other players may cover it by putting down (in this instance) two-thirds of the amount, the masse or entire sum to await the turning up of either main or chance. If a player 'throws out' three times in succession, the box passes to the next person on his left, who at once takes up the play. He may, however, 'throw in' without interruption, and if he can do so some half-dozen times, and back his luck, the gains will be enormous.

"The choice of a main is quite optional; many prefer 7 because they make a *coup* at once by throwing that number, or by throwing 11 which is a 'nick' to 7, but to 7 only. Shrewd players,

however, prefer some other main, with the view of having a more favourable chance to depend upon, of winning both stake and odds. For example, let us reverse what was mentioned above. Suppose the caster to call 5 and throw 7, he will then have 7 as his chance to win, with odds of three to two in his favour."

The more harmless and certainly more intellectual games of whist and piquet have also been played largely at the clubs, old and new, past and present, until the fashionable craze for bridge took possession of the town. Some large sums were lost and won at these games too. There was a famous game of whist played at the Roxburgh,¹ a small house kept by George Raggett, the proprietor of White's. The players were Alderman Harvey Coombe, the brewer, who was acknowledged to be one of the foremost whist players of his time, Tippoo Smith, already mentioned, Ward, M.P. for London, and Sir John Malcolm, already mentioned in connection with the Oriental Club. They sat down one Monday evening and played continuously, with a short pause for refreshments, through two nights and one whole day, and finally rose on the Wednesday morning, only because Coombe had to attend the funeral of one of his partners. At the end Coombe had won

¹ Not the Roxburgh Club founded in 1812, on the occasion of the sale of the Duke of Roxburgh's library, which lasted for forty-one days.

from Sir John Malcolm some £30,000. When the party broke up the chief winners handed Raggett, who had attended throughout the game, a number of counters, amounting to several hundreds of pounds in value. It was Raggett's custom to attend to the wants of the players, and he was thus rewarded, as well as sweeping up the money and counters which had fallen on the carpet.

There were some famous whist-players at Brooks'. The fifth Duke of Devonshire was one who stuck to his rubber till four in the morning, and then called for supper—a broiled blade bone, preceded by a mackerel boiled when in season. Alderman Sawbridge was universally acknowledged to be the finest whist-player in England, and it is told of him that he followed the game so closely that he remarked on one occasion, "It is strange that four fives should come together as the last cards," and when the hand was played it was found to be the fact. In a later generation Raikes describes Lieut.-Colonel Aubrey as a competent gambler at both whist and piquet in his day, who won and wasted fortunes, and once lost the sum of £35,000 at Graham's Club. It is calculated that he paid away no less than £60,000 in card money and always counted the greatest pleasure in life to win at whist, the next pleasure being to lose, so long as he played. He stuck to his game, morning, noon, and night, allowing himself a minimum time for meals and sleep, and in the

end died in poverty, eking out his existence by a small annuity he had once secured in the days of his affluence.

The game of whist is no doubt of English origin, and is traced back to that of "ruff and honours," an ancient game in which twelve cards only were dealt to each player, the uppermost of the remaining four being turned up to form the trump suit. A variation of the game came into vogue about 1680, known as "swabbers," which were the ace of hearts, the knave of clubs, the ace and deuce of trumps. The players to whom these cards were dealt, were entitled to a certain share of the stakes or payments independent of the play for tricks and honours. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the capabilities of the game began to attract attention, and it was taken up by a set of gentlemen who met at the Crown Tavern, in Bedford Row, and who formed a whist club, for which they laid down certain principles of play, based very much on our modern practice. It was ruled as essential to play from the strong suit ; to study the partner's hand ; never to force the partner unnecessarily, and to attend to the score.

The invention of whist has been attributed, but incorrectly, to Hoyle, the well-known author of the book of games. But at least he was the first to introduce whist scientifically to the general public, and he wrote also on piquet, quadrille, and back-

gammon. Little is known of Hoyle, except that he was a barrister by profession, and held the post of Registrar of the Prerogative in Ireland. He was born in 1670, and died in Cavendish Square in 1769, at the advanced age of ninety-seven. He received the sum of £1000 from his publisher for his treatise on whist, which ran through five editions in one year, and was extensively pirated. Hoyle is said to have given lessons in whist at a guinea per lesson. One of his great points was the calculation of probabilities at various stages of the rubber. This was deemed so important in guiding players, that a famous mathematician used to frequent coffee-houses, and for a small fee give his opinion on the state of the odds at whist.

The progress of whist was rapid. Bath became a great centre for the game in England, but it grew rapidly popular throughout Europe. Benjamin Franklin took it to Paris in 1767, where he introduced it as "Boston," which became the rage in the gay city during the American War of Independence. It still survives as "French Boston," or Boston de Fontainebleau, a whist game, but having the peculiarity that the knave of diamonds is the best trump unless diamonds are turned up, when the knave of hearts becomes the best trump, and the knave of diamonds takes its ordinary rank, next below the diamond queen. Whist was very popular in Italy and in the opera-house in Florence,

where card-tables were provided in the boxes. It was held that operatic music "increased the joys of good fortune, and soothed the affliction of bad."

Whist, when once established, soon begat many varieties, and at least nineteen games are clearly descended from this parent. In America we find "Duplicate," "Drive," and "Progressive" Whist, which are simply changes in the arrangement of the players and the methods of scoring. A custom revived by the Milwaukee Whist Club, of cutting the trump card from the still pack, is known in some parts of Europe as "Prussian" whist. Dummy and double dummy limit the number of players, and necessitate the exposure of one or more hands upon the table. The popular French game, *mort*, or the "dead hand," is the same as dummy, and is sometimes called "*whist à trois*." It is praised by good judges as a charming and highly scientific game. "Cayenne" introduced some important novelties, the chief being the privilege of changing the trump from the suit turned up, and "bridge," of which much remains to be said,¹ a very distinct variation from the original games, which it promises to depose and entirely supplant.

The laws of whist, first promulgated by Hoyle, remained supreme throughout the eighteenth century, but were much modified in 1810, when "short whist," so called, was devised as a relief to

¹ See post, Chapter xii.

a peer, Lord Peterborough, who, having lost heavily, desired to recoup himself more quickly, and gladly accepted a suggestion from some of his friends that five points instead of ten should decide a game. The play became so much more lively, money changed hands so much faster, that the new system "caught on," and the shortened game became the nearly universal rule. Another great change was adopted in the United States, where the game was decided by tricks alone, and honours were not allowed to count, one consequence of which is that the rubber points are not reckoned.

The standard rules in force remained unchanged until "Cœlebs," in 1851, brought out the code in use at that date, and afterwards at the authoritative Portland Club. But in 1863 Mr. John Loraine Baldwin collected a committee of experts at the Arlington, now the Turf Club, who published the rules that practically governed the whole whist world.¹ They were accepted by all the best London clubs, including the Army and Navy, Arthur's, Boodle's, Brooks', Carlton, Conservative, Garrick, Guards', Junior Carlton, Portland, Oxford and Cambridge, Reform, St. James', White's, and many more. Later, the laws of short whist, with a treatise

¹ The names of those gentlemen who codified the laws of whist at that time will be read with interest. They included Admiral Rous, chairman; Mr. G. Bentinck, M.P.; Mr. J. Bushe; Mr. J. Clay, M.P.; Mr. G. Greville; Mr. R. Knightly, M.P.; Mr. H. B. Mayne; Mr. G. Payne; and Colonel Pipon.

on the game was published by Mr. S. Clay, one of the best of modern whist-players, and dedicated to the Portland Club, to which he was admitted early, and where, as he says, "I learnt what little I know of whist."

The leading position, till lately held by whist, is now undoubtedly usurped, or more exactly has been conquered, by "bridge," described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XII

PLAY AT CLUBS—continued

CARD-SHARPING—THE DE ROS CASE AT GRAHAM'S CLUB—BRIDGE SUPPLANTS WHIST—MR. DALTON'S HISTORY OF ITS ORIGIN AND GROWTH.

PUBLIC gambling is strictly excluded from modern clubs and, although considerable sums may be won and lost in a few of the most reckless, it must be in the legitimate way at games of skill, not chance ; no form of hazard is tolerated ; the rattle of the dice is never heard, except in matter-of-fact, respectable backgammon ; bets may be freely exchanged, but with no extravagant odds. The old-fashioned, somewhat prosaic, but not uninteresting games are only permitted ; cribbage, five or six card, demanding judgment and finesse for success ; piquet requiring constant practice if it is to be played well ; écarté, commonly deemed a simpler game, but full of opportunities for the skilful player ; whist, of course, universally and unfailingly popular until these latter days, when it has yielded to the superior attractions of fascinating “bridge.”

One of the chief merits of whist has been that it offers small chances to the card-sharper. This

hardly amounts to much in a club where, presumably, honest people congregate, although on one occasion a person of the highest rank was detected in correcting fortune as shall be presently told. It could be managed, however, with prepared cards and with the collusion of confederates. A dexterous shuffler may deal himself an honour, or may discover how the cards lie, if he can introduce his own pack, for the use of the table ; but it is still held to be the fairest of games.

A disagreeable scandal occurred at a popular and much-frequented club in the winter of 1836, when the character of a well-known peer of the realm, Lord de Ros, was seriously aspersed, and he was openly charged with cheating at whist by using marked cards. The club was Graham's, situated at 87, St. James' Street, an unpretending house kept by the two Grahams, father and son. It was the reputed home of the best whist-playing at that time in London, and frequented by the most skilful and scientific whist-players. It was at this club that Lord Henry Bentinck invented the "Blue Peter," or call for trumps. Graham's got into trouble soon after the de Ros affairs and was dissolved, but immediately reconstituted. The plan had been devised to rid the club of ten or twelve members, who should never have been admitted, and who, making a habit of playing on higher stakes than they could settle, were considered unsuitable associates.

London at large was greatly exercised by the charge against Lord de Ros of deliberate and systematic cheating at Graham's Club. He was a man of the first fashion, the premier baron in the British peerage, holding a title dating back to the reign of Henry III. He had been educated at Eton and Oxford, had travelled much and made the grand tour ; he was possessed of an ample fortune, and was a member of the first clubs in London—White's, Boodle's, Brooks', and the rest.

Suspicion had long been raised against Lord de Ros, and in the trial for alleged libel that was eventually brought by the accused, an adverse verdict was given ; yet there were those who did not consider the evidence overwhelmingly against him. Lord de Ros was charged with habitually marking the cards at the whist table ; on ten or twelve occasions the marks had been verified by unimpeachable witnesses and the packs sealed. It does not appear how the fraudulent deed was performed, but probably the doctored pack was substituted during play. Another malpractice asserted on oath by many members was the trick called *sauter la coupe*, the act of substituting a high card for an original turn-up. This was effected after the "cut," before dealing, and the change carried out by clever manipulation of the cards. It was stated in evidence that at this moment, when holding the two parcels of cards divided by the "cutter," Lord de Ros was always

attacked with a hacking cough, intended to distract the attention of the observers from the trick he contemplated. It came to be known as the "king cough," for at the end a king, or indeed an ace, invariably appeared as the turn-up card. When in the act of dealing Lord de Ros, it was noticed, delivered the cards very slowly, examining each card at the corners or edge, as if looking for some mark. It had been found that the aces and picture cards bore a slight but almost imperceptible roughness or indentation, sufficient to betray the value of the card to the practised eye or sensitive finger-tip.

The case was tried in the King's Bench, before Lord Denman, in February 1837, and went against Lord de Ros. He was ably defended, and some doubts of his guilt have been entertained. There was a conflict of evidence ; many witnesses spoke in his favour, good men of undeniable repute, such as Lord Wharncliffe, Lord Robert Grosvenor, the Earl of Clare, and Sir Charles Dalbiac, declared that they had known and played with him as a skilful and honourable player for twenty or thirty years. The eminent surgeon, Mr. Lawrence, deposed that Lord de Ros suffered from a stiffness of the joints, which made holding the pack difficult, and the tricks of *legerdemain* alleged impossible. It was argued, moreover, that the charge had been fabricated by a small clique of inveterate gamblers, who found their winnings affected by the superior

play of this associate and were determined to ruin him. This line of attack was, however, deemed a proof of weakness, as the men in question were of undeniable integrity. Lord de Ros was never able to rehabilitate himself ; he could not rebut such damaging statements as that of Sir William Ingilby, who swore he had seen him *sauter la coupe* fifty or a hundred times. He did not long survive the proceedings in the King's Bench and soon died, it was said of a broken heart.

The case of Lord de Ros was notoriously not the only one of foul playing in clubs. Cheating was by no means uncommon at the time ; people who, even if they were not principals, served as confederates, and indirectly helped to bring off the fraud. Lord de Ros found partners despite the suspicion that he habitually and systematically cheated. A great deal of money still changed hands. Some players were strangely fortunate. One admitted that in the course of fifteen years he had won £35,000, chiefly at whist, making Graham's Club the chief scene of his operations. Another replied that his winnings averaged £1,600 a year. This gentleman said that he generally played from three to five hours daily before dinner, and that at times he had played all night.

The temptation to cheat at cards is always potent, and people with weak moral sense will still yield to it, even in the present generation. Some notorious

cases have occurred in recent days, when the offenders have belonged to the best circles, have been members of the best clubs, and have committed themselves in the most distinguished company. Facilities for dishonesty have, however, been curtailed by the exclusion of really gambling games in good clubs. They are encouraged, however, in numbers of private houses of the nicest consideration, despite their illegality under our puritanic codes ; and frequent police raids of shadier resorts attest the fixed resolve of strait-laced authorities to make people virtuous, if possible, by Act of Parliament.

A passing word may be devoted to the various games of chance, for the most part strictly forbidden in English clubs. Some of these games in the jargon of play are known as "banking games," in which one player is continually opposed to all the others ; "round" games, where each player is for himself ; and "partnership" games, where sides are equally divided. Among the first class are vingt et un, baccarat, and blind hookey ; poker and euchre come within the second category ; Napoleon, or nap, the same ; with faro, roulette, and loo.

The main distinction between games of skill and games of chance is that the former require application and attention, and a certain amount of native ability, to gain success in them, while the latter have nothing rational about them, and success may be equally achieved by the highest and lowest

capacity. Fickle Fortune will yield her gifts to the chances of throwing dice, but to win at games of skill demands the exercise of the mental powers, the possession of memory and of skill to contrive combinations and work them out. To risk money on the blind issues of luck is of course a much lower form of amusement, than the use of the intellectual faculties, in following out a game of skill.

This, no doubt, explains the empire so widely attained by "bridge" in these latter days, when it has largely dispossessed whist and is universally worshipped throughout the land. The rapid ascendancy gained by bridge is among the most remarkable of modern social phenomena. Yet the origin of this most popular game is very obscure. We have no authentic knowledge on the subject. Following the researches of Mr. Dalton, one of the greatest living authorities on Bridge, we learn that it is supposed to have first appeared in Russia ; but, as he tells us, there is no satisfactory proof of this assumption. The last edition of Hoyle's "Encyclopædia of all Indoor Games" describes a Russian Boston, a famous variation of the time-honoured whist, hailing from America, but does not mention the "Biritch," or Russian whist, said to be in existence in the land of the Czar, and commonly reputed to be the original of bridge, quite without authority. As a matter of fact, there

is no word "Biritch" to be found in the Russian dictionaries. But some time ago they played in Russia the game of "ieralasch," or "ieralache," which closely resembles short whist without a trump suit. The more scientific games of "Siberia" and "Preference" have been founded on "ieralasch," and have certain points in common with our bridge, but no more; and nothing is recorded showing that bridge came over from Russia.

Mr. Dalton thinks that bridge is really of Levantine origin. He tells us that it was played very much in its present form some forty years ago in Eastern Europe, particularly in Constantinople and Greece, and, in seeking a nationality for it, the game might fairly be called Greek. In support of this he quotes a letter he received from a Greek gentleman, now resident in London, stating, as within his memory, that the game of bridge in its present form was played in Manchester by a colony of Greeks, of whom his father was one, about 1870. The only difference between that and the present bridge was that the value of "no trumps" in Manchester was ten points instead of twelve, and that the four aces counted eighty, not one hundred, above the line, as at present. Another convention was accepted, the lead of a heart after a double in no trumps was the rule in Manchester long before it was supposed to have been invented in the United States.

The spread of bridge can hardly be credited to

the Greek people, seeing that twenty years or more elapsed before it travelled from East to West, and there is nothing to show that it extended beyond the family party at Manchester. Yet it was known in England outside the clubs long before its first appearance at the Portland Club in 1894, and was often played in private houses. The supplement of the 9th edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" states that bridge was first introduced into England in 1880 ; but no authority is given, and it is evident from what has just been said that it was played before that, if not generally. In 1886, however, a small pamphlet was printed in London, entitled "British or Russian Bridge." It is now very rare ; the only copy supposed to be extant is in the library of the British Museum. The account of the game is very meagre and limited to the laws of scoring, the declaration of trumps and the power of passing it on ; but nothing is said as to who framed these laws and by what authority. The value given to no trumps has never been entirely approved, and a strong opinion is in favour of making it ten points, not twelve, thus following a regular upward sequence. Some think that it was an accidental error, but it was accepted at the outset at the Portland Club. In some places there was another declaration, known as "Biritch," by which the game was played altogether *without* trumps, or with constant "no trumps." The value of the call was ten

points per trick, and the winners added forty points to their score under the name of "consolation."

Mr. Dalton gives another version of the origin of the title of "Bridge." He relates how, some twenty years ago, long before bridge was known in London clubs, two families, who played the game under the name of "Russian Whist," were living in neighbouring houses at or near Great Dalby, in Leicestershire. They were in the habit of visiting each other's houses on alternate evenings to play this delightful game, and the only road of communication between the two houses lay over a broken-down and somewhat dangerous bridge, which was very awkward to cross in the dark. It was a frequent occurrence for the departing guests to say to their hosts: "Thank goodness, it is your 'bridge' to-morrow," meaning that the other party would have to cross the dangerous bridge the next night. Hence is said to have arisen the title of "Bridge." This story may be taken for what it is worth, but it seems likely that the modern name of "Bridge" was merely a very easy corruption of the old title of "Biritch." The two words "Biritch" and "Bridge" have absolutely the same sound when spoken quickly.

M. Jean Boussac, in his "Encyclopédie des Jeux de Cartes," quotes an extract from the *Figaro* of November 26, 1893, to prove that bridge was played in Paris as early as that year. But the date

must have been earlier, for the game was transplanted some years before that to New York. Mr. Barbey, an American, re-crossed the Atlantic in April 1892, after spending the winter in Paris. He came back very full of the new and delightful card game, which he had learnt in that city, and shortly after his return he gave a dinner-party at his own house, with the special object of introducing it to his friends. The experiment was not much of a success. His guests did not appear to be at all enraptured with the novelty, saying that the scoring was too difficult, and the game altogether too complicated. Mr. Barbey, in no way disheartened, consulted with Mr. H. de Forrest Weekes, whom he had converted to his way of thinking. They agreed that the wrong sort of men had been present at the first trial, and a second dinner was given to a very carefully selected few, who were all enthusiastic card-players, and this time the result was very different.

In the meantime Mr. Barbey had drawn up on a sheet of paper a short *précis* of the method of scoring, and of the principal points of the game. He adopted the somewhat novel method of cutting out pips from a pack of ordinary playing cards and pasting them on to the aforesaid sheet of paper to indicate the different suits. This original document is now framed and hanging in the card-room of the Whist Club of New York. After the second

dinner party Mr. Weekes had copies of this document printed, and sent them round to all the leading clubs in New York. From this time the game spread like wildfire, and it has never paused since.

It is not necessary to repeat the oft-told tale of how Lord Brougham introduced bridge into the Portland Club, in London, in the autumn of 1894. The game had never appeared there up to that date, although it was not quite a stranger. Echoes of its existence had penetrated even into that sanctum, hitherto sacred to the cult of whist. Friends staying in Cairo had written home glowing accounts of the new card game being played there, and certain members of the New York Clubs, who are always welcome at the Portland, had given a full description of bridge to members of that club in 1893, but nobody seemed inclined to try it. Again, when the Americans came over in the spring of 1894, they expressed unbounded surprise to find us still playing whist, and many members will remember Mr. Winthrop Gray saying: "What! haven't you learnt bridge yet? You are quite behind the times, but you are bound to come to it before long." When he returned in 1895 he found that his words had been carried out to the letter, and that a very different state of affairs prevailed.

It is said that Lord Brougham was dealing at whist and when he came to the last card he neglected to turn it face upwards. He apologised.

“I’m sorry, but I thought I was playing bridge.” When pressed for explanation he gave a brief description of the new game, which was tried then and there, with the striking result that whist was routed root and branch, and bridge immediately took its place as the standard card game. Nobody who once played bridge ever cared to go back to whist. The triumph of the new game was sudden, complete and overwhelming.

From the Portland it soon found its way to the Turf Club, which had many members in common with the Portland, and there it was received with a still warmer welcome. For a short time it was confined to these two clubs ; but it soon began to spread to others, and wherever it was once introduced there it stayed, so that in an incredibly short space of time the game of whist came to be numbered with other relics of the past.

The necessity then arose for a recognised and authorised code of laws for the new game, and a committee of three members of the Portland was appointed in December 1895 to draft the rules required. The task was difficult, as their knowledge of the game was at that early stage very elementary ; but it was accomplished so skilfully that the rules then drawn up lasted, practically unaltered, for a period of ten years. They were issued early in 1895, and in July of the same year were submitted to a joint committee of the Portland and Turf

Clubs. When passed, with a few unimportant alterations, they became the standard laws of English Bridge. They remained in force until another joint committee of the same clubs issued the "Revised Laws of Bridge" at the end of 1904.

It was not until 1901 that any real standard work on the subject made its appearance. In that year Messrs. T. De La Rue & Co., who have ever been the pioneers of card literature, published, almost simultaneously, "Bridge Abridged, or Practical Bridge," by Mr. Dalton, from whom I have quoted largely, and "Hellespont Bridge"; "Hellespont" being the pseudonym of a gentleman residing in India, who is said to have had great experience of the game as it is played in the East.

For a considerable period after the introduction of the game into London in 1894, bridge remained almost exclusively a club game. Men who played it at London clubs also played it in their own country houses, or wherever they could get up a rubber; but it was by no means the popular social game that it has since become. It was not until the beginning of the present century, in 1900 or 1901, that the ladies discovered what a delightful field of amusement and mild speculation was open to them. When once they discovered the fascination of the game they adopted it as their own, and became even more enthusiastic about it than the men. There are at the present time many very fine women

bridge-players and their number is increasing every day. The general standard of bridge has improved enormously in the last three or four years. Whereas it was at one time the exception to find a really first-class player, they are to be met with now in every club and in every walk of life. Possibly bridge is still increasing in popularity in London ; and in the country, at the seaside, wherever people most do congregate, there the game is growing and flourishing like a green bay-tree.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BALLOT-BOX

ELECTION TO MEMBERSHIP — METHODS — FIGHTING FITZGERALD
BLACK-BALLED CONTINUALLY AT BROOKS'—HOW SHERIDAN
GAINED ADMISSION—VAGARIES OF THE BALLOT-BOX.

THE association of the many to secure a common object is the *raison d'être* of a club, and it is of the first importance, to secure peace and comfort and smooth working, that the members should hold the same views and be acceptable to one another. This is comparatively easy at the first start of an institution, but it can only be perpetuated in the well-established going concern by the discipline of the ballot-box. The numbers must be kept up by the accession of the most eligible recruits, and for this a close study of the candidates' book is in the first place essential, and in the second a consistent effort must be made to supervise the election. Interference with the ballot is to be deprecated, but a body of men who live much together may be excused for desiring to regulate the admission of their future companions. It is possible to make a man "safe" or very much the reverse at the ballot-box, and constantly at

elections which are general, of the whole constituency that is to say, and not by the committee only, with delegated powers, it is easy to "bring a man in," and conversely to "keep a man out," by a muster in force of supporters or opponents.

It is a truism to say that no one who has lived into middle age is sure of election at any club. The unknown neophyte will be much more certain to win admission by his negative qualifications than the comparative celebrity, who may have secured troops of friends, but will assuredly have trod on some corns and made, albeit unwittingly, some enemies. Caprice and prejudice will lead to black-balling quite as much as personal dislike, and candidates suffer as victims to their cloth or the colour of their principles. Not long since a clique in some of the military clubs indulged its spite against army doctors, none of whom were, as a rule, permitted to pass the ordeal of election unscathed. The reason alleged was the disapproval of a section of the combatant class of officers, of the efforts of their medical colleagues to secure army rank and military titles, a legitimate aim as many think, in which they have now succeeded for reasons that have seemed sufficient to the authorities at the War Office. It may be noted by the way that the wisdom of the change has been so far justified that the Royal Army Medical Corps no longer suffers from a dearth of candidates, which might

well be attributed to the unfriendliness shown the corps by professional comrades, the near relatives, even the brothers, of those shut out ; but the black-balling has not entirely disappeared even now. In one club it was met by the abdication of the general right of all members to vote, and the surrender of the privilege of election into the hands of the committee, a not uncommon practice, indeed, and exercised by such famous clubs as the Carlton, Boodle's, and the Junior Athenæum.

General ballot of all members is still preserved at Arthur's, the Athenæum, Brooks', the Oxford and Cambridge, the Reform, the Devonshire, and others. In the older clubs the rule prevails that one black ball in ten will exclude a candidate ; where the committee elects, two black balls in a quorum of five (Boodle's) excludes ; at the Carlton three black balls in a quorum of twelve. At Brooks', where the election is general and twelve must vote, the rejection is according to scale ; two black balls exclude where the total polled is twenty-four, between twenty-five and forty-nine three blacks invalidate, between fifty and upwards four black balls exclude.

The whimsical objections raised by members to candidates is amazingly illustrated in the story told of Thackeray at the Garrick Club, when a gentleman of the name of Hill was rejected. He was a man of fortune, self-made but illiterate, and sometimes

went astray with his h's. "I pilled him because he is a liar," said Thackeray. "He calls himself 'ill' when he isn't." A curious custom is said to prevail at the club in Baden Baden. Candidates are proposed and seconded by ladies who do not belong to the club; indeed, they do not enter it except at election time, when their votes decide as to the admission. This rule was characteristic of the first Almack's (1765) as has been said,¹ where the ladies nominated and chose the gentlemen and *vice versa*, "and where no lady could exclude a lady, and no gentleman a gentleman." The Ladies Rochford, Harrington, and Holderness were black-balled, and so was the Duchess of Bedford, who was, however, afterwards admitted. Lord March and Brook Boothby were black-balled by the ladies, very much to their astonishment. There was a dinner at the meetings of this club, followed by supper at eleven, and then play began "deep and constant." The vice of gambling at that time raged at an extravagant height.

Black-balling was frequent in the early club days, and constantly put in practice against persons unpopular in society, or dreaded from their quarrelsome tempers. The most notorious man of this class was George Robert Fitzgerald, a relative of the Duke of Leinster and a fire-eater of the most pronounced character. He was commonly called

¹ See *ante*, p. 41.

“Fighting Fitzgerald,” from his readiness to challenge any one on the smallest excuse. He was so constantly “out” and such a reckless duellist, that he could gain admission to none of the best London clubs. His bloodthirsty tastes, indeed, brought him finally to the gallows.

Fitzgerald was determined to become a member of Brooks’ and, if driven to it, to fight himself in. He asked Admiral Keith Stewart to propose him for the club, or, if he declined, to accept a challenge. The Admiral chose the more pacific course, but made up his mind to black-ball his own candidate. Fitzgerald accompanied Keith Stewart to the club on the night of the election, but remained down-stairs during it, which of course ended unfavourably for Fitzgerald, who was unanimously black-balled. At the scrutiny of the ballot-box not a single white ball was found within. This was, of course, sufficient to quash the election.

Now arose a difficulty, who was to inform Fitzgerald? No one would accept the unpleasant mission, which meant an immediate challenge and nearly certain death, for Fitzgerald as a rule killed his man. It was agreed in the club that Admiral Keith Stewart as the proposer should face Fitzgerald. “No, no, gentlemen,” replied the Admiral, “I proposed him, because I knew you would black-ball him; I did so myself. But I’m not going to commit suicide.”

Meanwhile "Fighting Fitz" was below, raging like a madman, ringing the bell repeatedly and charging the waiter to go upstairs and inquire the state of the poll. At last Mr. Brooks, the proprietor, came down, carrying a tray with coffee, which he offered the irascible duellist. "D—n your coffee, and you too," said Fitzgerald. "Tell me this instant, am I chosen or not?"

Brooks temporised. "There's been some mistake, sir; Admiral Stewart's compliments, sir, and one black ball has got into the box, somehow, and there must be a new election, which cannot take place till a month from now."

"Such a small mistake can be easily rectified. The new election shall take place at once. It's only a question of one black ball."

So Fitzgerald forced Brooks to go upstairs and convey his message to the timid members. "We'll give him two black balls this time," said the Duke of Queensberry, and the result was again communicated to Fitzgerald.

"Two black balls, is it? Well, they must try again, and make no more mistakes," cried the unabashed candidate. He got another negative answer, couched in definite language, that he was black-balled all over and had not the slightest chance.

"We'll see about that. I must look into this myself"; and in direct defiance of the rules, Fitz-

gerald walked up into the ballot-room. "They tell me," he began, "I've been elected three times."

"You've been balloted for three times, but not elected. On the contrary—" protested Admiral Stewart.

"How's that? I don't understand," roared the bully. "Who has black-balled me? Have you?"

"How can you suppose I'd do such a thing?"

"I don't suppose at all. I want a plain answer. Did you or did you not put in a black ball?"

Every one in the room was questioned in turn and every one denied the imputation.

"Well then," said Fitzgerald, "if no one pilled me, I must have been elected. Thank you, gentlemen. Waiter, bring a bottle of champagne. I'd like to enjoy myself in your honourable company."

The members, thus browbeaten and overborne, saw no remedy but that of cutting the intruder, and all agreed to send him to Coventry. No one spoke to him, no one responded to his invitation to crack another bottle, and Fitzgerald, out of countenance, got up and left the house. As soon as his back was turned, it was arranged that a force of constables should meet him at his next appearance, seize him and carry him off to the watch-house, if he attempted to again intrude. Fitzgerald must have heard of this threat, for he never returned to the club; but he put it all over London that he had been elected unanimously.

It was similarly resolved to keep Sheridan out of Brooks', but the ingenious dramatist succeeded in discomfiting his enemies and working his way into the club. George Selwyn, who tells the story in his own memoirs, hated Sheridan very cordially, and Lord Bessborough, with other members of Brooks', were determined to exclude him. It was arranged among them that some of them should attend every ballot without fail, so that the fatal black balls should be cast into the box. Sheridan knew of the plot and was prepared to upset it. On the evening of the election, both Lord Bessborough and Selwyn were at their post, but a special messenger suddenly arrived with the news that his lordship's house was on fire, and he hurried away in his sedan chair. At the same moment Selwyn, who lived hard by, received a verbal message that his adopted daughter, Miss Fagniani, had been seized with an alarming illness, and he also left the club. The moment their backs were turned, Sheridan was put up for ballot and duly elected. When his enemies came back they found they had been jockeyed and were too late to oppose Sheridan.

Another version is given of the same incident. It is said that Sheridan had been proposed three times, and three times black-balled. At last the objector was found to be George Selwyn, who hated Sheridan because the elder Sheridan was an actor. A fresh ballot was arranged, and Sheridan asked to be allowed

to deal with the matter. On the evening of the election Sheridan arrived at the club, arm-in-arm with the Prince of Wales, a few minutes before the balloting began. They entered the candidates' waiting-room, and the Prince sent for Selwyn, whom he engaged in conversation. Sheridan began a long and rather pointless story, which kept Selwyn engaged, if not exactly interested. Meanwhile, in his absence, the balloting proceeded, Sheridan was elected, and a waiter came in giving a prearranged signal notifying the result, whereupon he broke off abruptly, and ran upstairs to receive the congratulations of his friends. Selwyn now heard what had happened, and Sheridan laughing said, "I'll now tell you the rest of that story."

"Not a bit of it; it's all a fraud," cried Selwyn; "I want to hear nothing about it. The whole thing is a lie, invented to keep me out of the ballot-room. You've no right to come in." But Sheridan had succeeded and the fact spoke for itself.

As a guarantee of the eligibility of a candidate, it is the rule in many clubs that the proposer and seconder should speak of them from their own personal acquaintance. This system is occasionally carried much further, and the newcomer is taken for a time on trust; he is admitted to the privileges of membership for a month, during which time he uses the club and shows his quality to his future associates.

The vagaries of members with regard to the ballot-box are well known. Some are such curmudgeons that they will allow no election to pass unchallenged. Many clubs contain one or more members who want to black-ball everybody ; at every general election the "pill" is put in, even when the candidate is perfectly eligible. The malcontent is often well known and makes no secret of his hostility. Once his determination to reject produced quite the opposite result. The election was all but completed at a certain high-class club, when it was found that the minimum quorum of voters was short of one. The whole operation would have been invalidated unless the number could be at once completed. X., a notorious blackmailer, was in the house, but for some reason had not voted. He was hunted up and reminded of the election in progress, when he rushed into the room threw in his ball, of course a black one, the only black one, and although he was dissentient the rules had been observed and all candidates were accepted.

A few words more about " Fighting " Fitzgerald. He was a cadet of the noble Irish family Fitzgerald, and of the Geraldine and Desmond branch of it. Born about the middle of the eighteenth century, he was educated at Eton, and left it early to enter the army. He soon became notorious for his reckless, quarrelsome disposition, his amours and intrigues, which involved him continually in duels.

One of his most notable love affairs ended in his marriage, against her parents' consent, with a sister of the Right Hon. Thomas Connolly, of Castletown, a cousin of the Duke of Leinster. He secured with her a portion of £10,000, and they resided on the Continent until her death. He returned to England in 1773, and was the hero of a discreditable *fracas* at Vauxhall Gardens, caused by his unwelcome attentions to the beautiful actress, Mrs. Hartley, whose part was taken by a clergyman, the Rev. Henry Bate, very much to the discomfiture of Fitzgerald and the Macaronis, of which unpleasant club he was a member.

A second marriage with the heiress of Mr. Vaughan of Carrymore, Mayo, brought him a considerable accession of fortune. He now took a prominent part in politics, and was a keen partisan of the party claiming legislative independence for Ireland, or as it is now called Home Rule. He did not neglect serious affairs, and introduced many improvements on his Mayo estates; and especially in the cultivation of wheat.

But he broke out often into wild excesses, and adopted the dangerous pastime of fox-hunting by night, while he was notorious for many turbulent adventures in the social life of London and Dublin. Then he became mixed up in a series of shady financial transactions with his father, George Fitzgerald, who had been an officer in the Austrian Service

and had married a sister of the Earl of Bristol, who was also bishop of Derry. "Fighting" Fitzgerald was the eldest son of his father and, for a capital sum paid down, he secured a rent-charge on his father's estate. When the father's payments fell much into arrear, his son proceeded against his father and was legally adjudged to be the owner of the family property. Fitzgerald was to pay a small annuity to his father, but altogether failed to carry out the contract. Having no male issue, his younger brother was the presumptive heir, and they quarrelled over the possible succession. Whereupon Fitzgerald laid forcible hands upon his brother, abducted him, and held him a prisoner.

For this offence he was arrested and sentenced to fine and imprisonment. Now the father interposed and, first agreeing to surrender the estates on receipt of a certain sum, then drew back and defied him, securing his capture by the officers of the law. Fitzgerald was carried off to gaol, but became seriously ill and was presently set free.

His health soon improved, and he at once fell back into evil courses. He had many enemies, and fought them all fiercely. Upon one, a certain McDonnell, he headed an attack, in which the victim was wounded badly by Fitzgerald's followers. A second attack, made on the public road, ended in a second wound, and one of McDonnell's escort was shot dead in the affray,

Fitzgerald being present at the time. He was taken up as an accessory to the murder, lodged in Castlebar gaol, and brought to trial for his life. A verdict of murder having been brought in, he was cast for death and hanged on June 12, 1786.

The desire to black-ball candidates has been developed into a craze in some clubs, where the ballot-box is at the mercy of the whole constituency. The reasons that impel members to exercise their right to admit or exclude all who offer themselves for election are often perfectly inexplicable. In the extreme case, naturally it would become suicidal, for when carried to its furthest limits no one could join the club. Yet cases have occurred in which it was persisted in strangely, and on no more excuse than ill-temper, and the dog-in-the-manger spirit by the curmudgeons who, having "got in" themselves, were keenly resolved to keep their neighbours out.

An authentic story is told of one famous institution in St. James' Street, where a number of ancient members made it a law to themselves to reject every one without exception who had offered himself as a candidate. This practice of black-balling was long held as an imperative and unbreakable rule, but was at length evaded by a stratagem. At one election a number of a newcomer's friends were in attendance, but outside at a distance from the club-house. No one appeared in the committee-

room, and it was generally supposed there would be no quorum. The malcontents therefore abstained from voting. But when only a few minutes of the legal time for balloting remained, and the servants were at the point of removing the ballot-boxes, an overwhelming number of the candidate's friends rushed in and elected him, before the slightest opposition could be organised. After this the absurd system of black-balling was dropped, and the club to-day is still alive and prosperous.

CHAPTER XIV

THE INNER LIFE OF A CLUB

THE DAY'S DUTIES—THE SYSTEM OF SUPPLY AND SERVICE—MEAL HOURS—HOW MEMBERS PATRONISE THE CLUB—WHEN MOST FULL—LATE SITTINGS—SERVANTS, HOW ALLOTTED AND THEIR FUNCTIONS—ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMFORT AND CONVENIENCE OF MEMBERS—CARE OF CLUB PROPERTY—CLUB POSSESSIONS OFTEN EXTENSIVE AND VERY VALUABLE.

FEW who find a comfortable and generally luxurious home in a club quite realise how the result is attained. They are not intimately acquainted with the mechanism, the well-contrived, slowly perfected system on which it works, the wheels on which it runs, the agents and governors that apply and direct the motive-power. It has all been thought out and patiently evolved after trial and practical experiment, so that every part has been fitted into its place, and every function is performed smoothly and with admirable precision. It is a triumph of “red tape” at its best, of organised method and strict observance of minute detail.

For convenience of description let me say, paradoxically, the day at a club begins the night before. About 9 p.m., when the rush is over, the *chef* or chief

cook takes stock of what is left on hand, and frames his estimate of what will be required for next day's consumption. His calculation is based upon the season of the year and the average number of members using the club at the time, from which he arrives at the probable quantities he will want, the amount of meat, poultry, vegetables, game, fish, and minor supplies. If he is wise, he looks ahead and lays in things to hang and mature, but the night's orders cover next day's demands, all of which are handed over to the kitchen clerk for transmission to the tradesmen, who will deliver their goods.

At the same time the housekeeper who rules the "still-room," which with the kitchen provides the whole of the club food-supply, is busy like the *chef* in her estimate for milk, butter, eggs, fancy bread, tea and coffee, jams, pickles, olives, and sugar—these come from contract tradesmen and the co-operative stores. It is an interesting point that muffins are in large demand, and are delivered twice daily at the rate of fourteen to the dozen, which is one better than the baker's tally. The housekeeper, like the *chef*, bases her estimate on the season of the year, and, if she has put it too low, supplements the supply forthwith.

A close check is maintained on goods sent in and most are weighed on arrival by the basement porter, generally under the supervision of some higher official—the kitchen clerk's orders are returned with

the supplies, and any discrepancies noted and recorded. A careful, conscientious *chef* makes it his business to immediately examine the materials received and satisfy himself that they are of the best quality and likely to do credit to his culinary art. He will forthwith reject everything that does not please him and come up to the proper standard, to avoid the blame which would otherwise be undoubtedly his. The table kept in the club is very much the concern of the cook, and if he is an able, strong man, he will protect himself against the tradesman who may try to palm off inferior stuff on the club. His chief responsibility is with the butcher, for fishmonger and poult erer supply their goods on approval ; their trays arrive twice every day, afternoon and evening, and are passed in at once to the kitchen, labelled "On sale or return," and are at once judged as to quality by responsible persons. As a general rule the shops supplying are within easy reach of their clubs. All other provisions are delivered in the morning, somewhere between 8 and 10 a.m.

London clubmen do not generally keep very early hours. Few houses open their doors before 9 a.m. or at best 8.30 a.m. in the summer season, by which time the housemaids, who live on the premises, have completed their house-cleaning. By 9 a.m. one or two old stagers may have collected on the steps at the grand entrance, waiting to be admitted at the regulation hour, and take their seats

at once at the breakfast table to consume a meal ordered overnight. The number is limited, as a rule, and the coffee-room fills up slowly, if at all, in the forenoon, for the English set breakfast is not greatly patronised. In some clubs the second breakfast, the *déjeuner à la fourchette*, is popular, or is merged into an early lunch, with wine, instead of tea or coffee. An ingenious device is not unknown of obtaining a first meal cheap, that of ordering a pot of tea in the smoking-room, with muffins or sandwiches, thus avoiding the coffee-room charge for "table." This was defeated in one club by a rule that a single cup of tea served anywhere before midday would cost eighteen-pence.

The charge for "table" was constantly a bone of contention. It was sometimes evaded by lunching early, or so late that a dinner meal might be consumed with no more charge than the table for "luncheon," before the charge for dinner-table was due. At one time the luncheon-table included table beer gratis, with bread and cheese; the dinner "table" now includes vegetables, sauces, and cheese. The luncheon-hour, between 1.30 p.m. and 3 p.m., is the busiest in most clubs, when men gladly escape from their offices and daily business to enjoy a little leisure and friendly intercourse. This is very much the practice at the City clubs when the times are dull, or yet more so when some fortunate *coup* calls for special rejoicing. In the West End,

where idle men congregate, a luncheon has been prolonged till a late hour over a curious mixture of liquors, followed by a short walk and a return to table for a second feast.

Club life is brisk in the afternoon, when members gather eager for news, to gossip, to hear the latest scandal, and pass on the last revivified "chestnut." The tea-hour again brings in numbers who a few years ago would have swallowed their sherry and bitters, and who now prefer their mild bohea to "cocktails" or any *apéritif*. The increase of afternoon tea-drinking will always count as one of the strangest features of the age; it is the prevailing habit in clubs and counting-houses, in messes and common rooms, and in my lady's chamber. The best proof of its popularity is to be seen in the extension of tea-houses, some on the most ambitious scale, and the unfailing introduction of tea at afternoon calls in private houses.

The club at dinner-time is left very much to the *habitués*, the members who most largely use it, with the floating population perpetually passing through, and the Amphitryons, a class of varying dimensions, who profit by it and the advantages it offers to entertain their friends. The attendance greatly differs; one night the club may be quite full, at another a howling wilderness, but some of the regular clubmen will always be in evidence, exhibiting much the same traits, finding fault generally, and

all their attention concentrated upon the most important function of the day.

How to order dinner, how it should be cooked and served, are serious matters that monopolise the clubman's mind. See him at the desk assisted by the chief of the coffee-room staff, anxiously discussing and debating the relative value of *plats* and their preparation ; watch his disgust, if one is dished too quickly, and another comes up half cold ; his indignant protest, if his favourite seat has been usurped by some one more punctual and with equal claim to it. He will launch the vials of his wrath on the luckless carver, whom he declares unfit for his position ; he will harry the wine butler, whether over twopenny claret or cognac half a century old ; the back of his dinner bill affords insufficient space for the diatribes he indites against the staff, the viands, the *chef*, the committee of course, and the whole management of the club.

If the day in many clubs begins late, it may be said, conversely, to end early ; in the small hours, that is to say. Members are very much disinclined to go to bed. In some sober, old-fashioned establishments the lights may be turned out at midnight, but others, not a few, are little better than night-houses, and not even stringent rules decreeing heavy fines will avail to empty them. One may be quoted, in which the fines ran up as high as ten guineas, rising from two guineas for remaining in the club-house

after 2 a.m., to five guineas at 3 a.m., and the full sum of ten guineas at 6 a.m., when the club was peremptorily closed. At another the highest penalty levied is three guineas, and the last hour 3 a.m., at which hour the fine of ten pounds was imposed at a third. Congenial converse might be pleaded as an excuse for these late sittings ; but only pure recklessness inspired those who sat up till daylight in order to swim a match in the Serpentine.

A curious claim was advanced by a member who was repeatedly fined. He urged that as he provided the means, he was entitled to divide the money, and he wished to bestow it on the club waiters he especially preferred. The usual club rule is that a present should be given to the servants who actually sat up, and the member, much to his chagrin, was so informed.

Attentive and devoted service rank with the provision of creature comforts among the boons afforded in a club. In every well-ordered house there is an excellent division of labour among many separate departments, each of which has its own particular staff. Taking first the kitchen, we find a *chef* as supreme, with a second cook and a head kitchen-maid, both of them as a rule engaged by himself. The *chef* attends principally to the soups and sauces, concerned mainly in the essential condition of flavours ; and the second cook supervises the *entrées* and made dishes, while the head kitchen-

maid takes general charge of all the female assistants, of whom there are generally half a dozen, viz. a fish-maid, two vegetable-maids, a roasting-maid, a boiling-maid, and a pastry-maid, each with her own peculiar duties. A good kitchen to be well served needs also a scullery-maid and an odd-maid, who acts as general servant or charwoman.

A useful functionary is the kitchen clerk, one of whose primary duties is to deal with the members' dinner orders when passed down to him from the coffee-room, being generally rolled up into a ball and dropped down by a tube on to his desk. He extracts a note of each dish, soup, fish, entrée, joint, and so forth, on a separate slip of paper, which is hung on a peg in front of his desk, and stripped regularly by the various kitchen-maids to whom each refers. It is their business to prepare each dish and bring it, at the time stated, to the bottom of the kitchen lift, by which it is run up to the coffee-room level, where it is received by the waiter, who has to serve it at table.

There are a dozen or two waiters, more or less, for the coffee-room, who serve in three reliefs or sides, apportioning the duties among them in turn. The first set begins work half an hour before the opening of the club, to clean and tidy up, set the tables, and remain on duty the whole day until 9 p.m., when each man is detailed in relief of others outside the coffee-room. The second side are engaged

in the same way and till a later hour. The third are free all day and come on at 5 p.m., to take part in the great function of dinner-serving, when the whole strength of the staff is on duty. Where there is a coffee-room bar, as in most large clubs, a barman and an assistant-barman are employed on alternate days, short or long, and are busy all day with current demands for minor refreshments, and serving the "standing lunch" and short drinks so much in favour nowadays. Economical members thus save the charge for table, and thirsty souls find prompt solace over the counter.

The bar is always open until after dinner, and has a perennial supply of the tit-bits, the "ap-petisers," buns, biscuits (*gratis*), and many varieties of cake for all men, young and old, who dare to risk the gratification of a "sweet tooth." The barman is also often a sort of odd-man to the cashier, whom he supplements and replaces on occasion. The cashier has, of course, his own regular assistant, whom he nominates himself and for whom he is responsible. A minute system of checks usually prevails, to provide for the safe custody of the cash-takings, which are held by the cashier for just one week, and handed over to the secretary every Monday morning one week in arrears, but accounted for daily on paper. The cashier has thus one week's money in hand, and he can use it in cashing members' cheques, if called

upon. Sums of £5 to £10 can always be obtained in change for cheques, and much larger amounts after reference to the secretary. Every facility is afforded to members for the cashing of cheques, which, however, in rare cases are returned, with unpleasant consequences to the defaulter, who is debarred from repeating the privilege, if expulsion, after inquiry, is not the dire result.

A story is told of one high-class Service club, in which a youthful member exhibited much financial acumen. He had paid a visit to his bankers, the well-known army agents, Cox & Co., and had heard the unpleasant news that he was overdrawn. He begged piteously to be allowed to cash a cheque for a fiver and had been sternly refused. His father had expressly forbidden it, said the clerk who kept the young gentleman's account. The young officer went away sorrowfully, and repaired to his club, which shall be nameless, although its liberal treatment of its member entitled it to be recorded. Here no objection was raised to the impecunious officer cashing a cheque for £100. With the twenty five-pound notes in his pocket he hurried back to Craig's Court, and exhibited his money in triumph to the horror-stricken and indignant clerk. "Look here," pleaded the astute young man, "I'll give you £95 here and now, if you will let me keep one five-pound note. I want it so badly." The ingenious device was quite successful, but

history does not record how the money so cleverly raised was spent—probably at Skindles', or the Star and Garter.

One other important officer is principally concerned with the coffee-room and its proceedings. This is the wine butler, who divides his time between the care of the cellar and producing its contents for consumption. His is a highly confidential position; he is responsible for large and valuable stock, not only its safe keeping and good order, but also as to its replenishment and the filling up of bins with the best vintages shipped and received in this country. He may be greatly trusted as an experienced taster, whose advice is generally sought by the wine sub-committee when laying down, and the consumer when giving his orders at the table. He spends long hours in the club; all the forenoon till after luncheon, and again in the evening till a late hour at night. It is his duty to keep the dispense cellar supplied with the wines in regular demand, and draw them as required form the main cellar. There is generally a reserve stock of wine in addition to the butler's stock and this is in the charge of the Secretary. There is also a wine-merchant's reserve stock of wines, stored in the club cellars, but at the merchant's risk, or retained by the merchant on the account of the club.

An onerous responsibility is imposed upon the wine

butler, that of the plate in daily use. Few large clubs eat off, or with, anything but silver, and such large quantities are being constantly handled that the utmost precautions are necessary to prevent disappearance. The whole of the silver out is checked and counted over every night, when the day's work is done, and no servant is at liberty to leave the house until the tally is reported correct. Still cases of loss or theft have been known, and have long remained undiscovered. An ancient scandal occurred in one well-known club, where the abstraction was made by a member, whose inexperience as a thief soon led to his detection.

The domestic arrangements of every club are very much those of any gentleman's house. A housekeeper has a staff of housemaids under her, who begin early, often at 5 a.m., to dust and clean and prepare all parts for the opening at the customary hour. The whole of the forenoon is occupied with kitchen and offices and their own apartments, and from 3 to 5 p.m. a siesta, or going to bed for a couple of hours, is often allowed. Some are always on duty attending to crockery and plates. The still-room maids are engaged from the early morning, and must prepare tea, coffee, toast, poached eggs, and so forth for members' breakfasts, and salads for luncheons, bread and butter and muffins for afternoon tea. One still-room maid remains on duty till midnight.

The service is well organised on all floors. The smoking-room waiters are always on duty; one, the chief, takes charge of cigars and cigarettes, and records and accounts for all sales; another is responsible for the fluids of all kinds, ready to comply with orders received. The drawing-rooms are served by one or more waiters to answer calls; the library has its own special staff, and the head, the librarian, attends to literary needs, the exchange of books forms the circulating library, the purchase and classification of standard works, the disposal of the old periodicals, the supply of writing-paper, the outfit of the writing-tables. One club not long ago permanently employed a professional quill-pen mender. This librarian may be a man-of-all-work; he makes out the public notices for the notice boards, corrects the wine cards, and revises the lists of members; examines all books, and arranges for re-binding; collects old newspapers, and divides them equally among the hospitals to which they are to be sent.

The card-rooms and the billiard-rooms have their own appointed staff. In both places, a certain exclusiveness is often shown. Many clubs will not admit strangers to play cards or billiards, or only in a special room or on a particular billiard-table. The money taken for games is dropped into a box and handed over to the secretary next morning. The markers regularly relieve each other, and one

or more are always on duty. The waiters in those rooms have their own stocks of cigars and drinks, to answer all demands for the players.

In all well-managed clubs the club property, the furniture, the articles in current use, and the reserves of stores are scrupulously cared for, minutely catalogued and checked. Annual stock-takings are made by professional experts, who give certificates of correctness and condition. A club's possessions are often extensive and very various. Over and above its art treasures,¹ its furniture and fittings, its wine cellars and its kitchen appliances, it generally owns great stores of linen, plate, crockery, clothing, and so forth. Some have large libraries and add regularly to the books on their shelves.

The best idea of the stored wealth of belongings will be gathered from a few detailed figures of one or two of the largest clubs. Take, for instance, the Oxford and Cambridge, which shows a balance in favour of the club between liabilities and assets of £62,373, and the definite amounts of various assets are as follows:—Furniture £19,433, plate and linen £4,200, books and maps in the library £10,280, wine in stock £10,708, spirits £387, cigars £1,272; in addition, the leasehold club premises are estimated at a present value of £16,093, subject to a yearly depreciation of one twenty-eighth. This club, taking one chance year, 1904, is run with

¹ See post, Chapter xv.

annual revenue of £13,468, and the annual expenditure is £12,854, showing a balance profit of £614.

At the Athenæum again, the library, reputed the best in London, is entered on the books as having cost in 1893, £29,127, and it was valued then for insurance at £14,000. The stock of wine was put at £4,358, and the furniture was valued at £4,000.

At the Reform Club in 1905 the chief assets were : the value of lease unexpired, the furniture and plate, the library, linen, china and glass, the stock of wines, spirits, and cigars. The first of these, after necessary depreciation, stood at £16,200 ; the furniture and plate, including repairs and renewals, were worth £7,024, the library was valued at £6,970, the linen, china, and glass at £1,025, the wine stock was at £10,385, a large amount, but very much exceeded by one London club, the Junior Carlton, which keeps a stock of £27,124 worth of wines, spirits, etc., at cost price. The solvency of this last named could never be much doubted, seeing that it possesses the very valuable asset of freehold site and premises, a somewhat unusual advantage in Clubland. The property of the Junior Carlton, at the corner of Piccadilly and St. James', is estimated at £225,000. Among the few West-End clubs which are similarly endowed are the Windham, the Constitutional, and the Army

and Navy Clubs. In these days, when the value of land in the best parts of the Metropolis rises so rapidly and appreciably, a club is fortunate which is its own landlord.

The "Senior," the old United Service, rightly so named by its antiquity, has only recently re-established itself firmly on a new lease from the Crown, or more exactly the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. It paid a substantial fine, £10,000 in cash, and agreed to carry out certain extensive alterations and improvements, all tending to beautify and enlarge the premises. It is pledged to pay a great rental, £2,400 per annum, and will be heavily taxed by the same serious development of King's and parochial rates that is crushing the whole neighbourhood, but its solid assets are well maintained, although outdone by other clubs. Thus the furniture is valued at £3,681, the plate at £2,632, the china, glass, cutlery, and linen at £1,774; and its pictures are many of them valuable art treasures. But its library, albeit useful and well fitted, only stands at £3,000, and the stock of wine at £3,823.

The Junior United Service Club has also recently revised its position, and obtained a new lease in 1902 from the Woods and Forests for sixty years, at a rental of £2,500 per annum, with the payment of a fine of £10,000, half in cash and half by the surrender of certain freeholds in St. Albans Place adjoining, and the expenditure of a sum of money in

improvements. The Junior's assets are considerable. The new lease is valued at close on £50,000, its furniture, plate, china, linen, and so forth, together amount to £11,646; its treasures include one portrait of King Edward VII., and another of the German Emperor, presented by the German Embassy in return for the esteemed hospitality of the club to their foreign visitors. The stock of wine is put at £3,172, and the cigars at £227. No separate item is published of the value of the books in the library.

The future of the Naval and Military Club is precarious, and the certainty of remaining at Cambridge House is by no means assured. The house belongs to the Sutton family, and the present owner of the estate is the young baronet, Sir Richard Sutton, who is currently reported to wish to re-enter and assume possession. This has been so much anticipated that a sinking-fund to prepare for the evil day was started some years ago, and has already reached some £15,000. The money is invested in gilt-edged securities readily realisable. As the rent at present paid is £5,000 per annum, it is possible that the landlord may not be disposed to disturb so profitable a tenancy. The possessions of the club are on a par with those of other institutions. The furniture and fixtures are valued at £12,428, the linen at £1,234, the china and glass at £458, the plate at £1,829, the cutlery at £122. The library when first formed was composed of

well-chosen standard books, but it was not extensive, and its present value is only £875. The cellar is well stocked with choice vintages, and has a cash value of £4,858, an amount rising to £6,340 with the addition of spirits, cigars, and cards.

The regular inspection and condemnation of articles in use at a club are never overlooked. Linen past work is torn up and passed on to the hospitals. Crockery is replaced as it is broken, and the damage charged partly to servants, partly to the club. In economical establishments chips are not held to invalidate pieces of china, which are only condemned when obviously unsightly and useless. The replacement of part-worn brooms, mats, and so forth, is made under the supervision of some responsible official.

The secretarial business of a club is elaborate and involves much book-keeping and careful accounting. The principal books embrace a cash-book, for the entry of all receipts and payments ; and a ledger, in which all items are posted and classified. The weekly provision-book is an abstract of all tradesmen's accounts, taken from their pass-books and countersigned by the heads of the two supply departments ; the *chef* for solid food, the housekeeper for still-room supplies. In addition there is a wages-book for monthly settlement ; wine-books for reserve stock or dispense stock, a wine-merchant's stock-book, and ale, spirits, and mineral-

waters book. A careful record of all purchases is kept in the cigar stock-book, and the cigar-stock dispense-book deals with the issues to servants for sale to members. The secretary and his assistants have also charge of books concerning members' subscriptions, the rent of chambers, where they exist, and of lockers and drawers. Full inventories are kept up of all furniture and other belongings, which are carefully examined half-yearly.

CHAPTER XV

ART TREASURES IN CLUBS

THE INTERESTING AND VALUABLE COLLECTION OF THEATRICAL PORTRAITS AT THE GARRICK CLUB, FORMED BY CHARLES MATHEWS THE ELDER—PICTURES DESCRIBED, WITH BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNTS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTORS PORTRAYED.

MOST clubs have their art treasures, acquired by gift and the judicious outlay of surplus funds. A detailed list might interest the connoisseur ; but, with one or two notable exceptions, will hardly repay record. Many have been glad to show proper respect to royal founders and patrons, to cherish the memory of distinguished comrades by portraits and busts. Here and there treasures have been presented or bequeathed, and are jealously preserved, such as the picture of Lady Hamilton found on Nelson's cabin table after the battle of Trafalgar, which is in the possession of the Army and Navy Club, the gift of a member. The same club shows with some pride a fine piece of Gobelin tapestry, once the property of the great Napoleon, and given by Napoleon III. in gratitude for many hospitalities from the club. The Service clubs, especially the Senior and Junior, have good portraits of eminent

sailors and soldiers, and some fine battle pictures by ancient and modern painters. War-memorial windows have been erected everywhere to members who have fallen in the service of King and country, and many pieces of statuary enshrine the memory of Queen Victoria.

One club in particular owns a rich collection of art treasures associated with the British drama, of which the Garrick, since its creation, has been the chosen home. A full account of these curious and valuable pictures may be inserted here and will, perhaps, give interest to this book for a larger public than the club itself. Although enriched in later days by many presentations—the gifts of members, artistic and others—the bulk and backbone of the collection consists of the gallery formed long ago by the elder Mathews. A passion for collecting theatrical portraits was early developed in that eminent actor, and was greatly aided by his good fortune in securing the bulk of the pictures which had belonged to Mr. Harris, the old lessee of Covent Garden. Mrs. Mathews, the wife and biographer of the first Charles Mathews, tells us how the pictures were saved from the swindling tenant that robbed them of their rent in the King's Road cottage. Mathews' "giant hobby," as she calls it, was then (1814) in its infancy, but the Mr. Tonson who succeeded them in the cottage begged to be allowed to retain the pictures, which were then hanging in one small

room. But Mathews would as soon "have left behind him an eye or a limb as these his treasures." When times became more prosperous, and Mathews took the house at Hampstead, he was at great pains to build a gallery on purpose for his pictures. They had now increased considerably in number, and were not the least potent of the attractions in his charming home. Yet his gallery was a constant trouble to him. Some of his grievances with regard to it have been preserved, and are sufficiently amusing.

Applications to see the pictures were very numerous, but all comers were not equally appreciative. When Mathews welcomed an earnest and intelligent visitor, he called it "receiving a dividend" on his outlay; and it was really a treat, Mrs. Mathews tells us, to listen to his extempore catalogue, his anecdotes, and his imitations of the persons portrayed. But he was constantly annoyed by inquisitive persons, who came to see the actor celebrity, rather than the pictures he owned. Their absurd and inappropriate remarks chafed him terribly, and often enough he would escape, declaring it was time for his afternoon ride. Some of these mistakes, which so irritated and exasperated Mr. Mathews, are worth repeating. That Harlowe's fine picture of Mrs. Siddons as "Lady Macbeth" should be thought a portrait of Mrs. Mathews; that Dewilde's exquisite portrait of Miss De Camp

(Mrs. Charles Kemble) in male attire, as Patie in the "Gentle Shepherd," should be thought to represent Master Betty; or that he should be asked by a person, who had evidently never entered a London theatre, why there was no portrait of Milton with the rest, are humorous illustrations of Mr. Mathews' tormentors. But the time came when the whole collection was thrown open to the public. Private reasons led to the exhibition of the Mathews pictures in Oxford Street; and there is still extant a catalogue, prefaced by a characteristic article of Charles Lamb's, which appeared originally in the *London Magazine*.

After their exhibition, and still in Mr. Mathews' lifetime, they were removed to the Garrick Club. They had now practically passed into the possession of Mr. John Durrant, a member of the Garrick, who eventually gave them to the club. His example has been followed, among others, by Sir John Millais; by Sir John Gilbert, who painted for the club his admirable portrait of Thackeray; by the late John Philip, R.A., and many more. The great landscape painters of a now past generation contributed to the embellishment of the new house, and there is no finer specimen of a Stanfield, than the magnificent sea-piece in the smoking-room; no better David Roberts, than the picture of the "Holy Land," painted expressly for the same room; a picture too in which Louis Haghe collaborated, he having also contributed

two very fine street scenes with figures. Mr. Stanfield had previously presented the club with a beautiful Italian landscape, "The Port of Ancona," which hangs on the staircase; and the list would be incomplete, if we did not include the name of Mr. O'Neill, A.R.A., who has painted and presented a large portrait group of the leading members of the club. Another valued, and in its way delightful, gift was the series of water-colour drawings, representing the younger Mathews in his various characters. These drawings, which are excellent specimens of clear, clean water-colour work, are unsigned, but I have heard them attributed to a Mr. Child, who was well known in artistic circles of a past generation.

The theatrical portraiture of the Garrick covers a wide range; it goes back from the present day to those remote, semi-heroic times immediately following the Restoration, when his Majesty's servants were still deemed rogues and vagabonds, liable to be proceeded against at law in spite of the patronage and protection of the great. These early works are still more interesting, perhaps, from an historical than an artistic point of view. One or two may be attributed to the great painters of the time, but are not invariably in their best manner; others are almost unmistakable copies, or the works of now forgotten, nameless men. The most ancient in date, perhaps, is the picture between the windows of the coffee-room,

by Michael Wright, signed and dated 1672, a copy, by the painter himself, of the original, a picture of the famous actor Lacey, which was a commission from Charles II., and is now in Windsor Castle. Lacey was born at Doncaster and had been a dancing master, but entered the army and then took to the stage, where he became a very successful actor and wrote several good comedies, allied, it was said, to French farces, more to suit popular tastes than his inability to write true comedy. He was a great favourite with the Merry Monarch, who especially liked him in the three parts represented in this picture—one in the “*Taming of the Shrew*”; Parson Scruple, in “*The Cheats*”; and Monsieur de Vice, in the “*Country Captain*.” Another very successful character of Lacy’s was Teague, the Irish footman, in the “*Committee*”—“a merry but indifferent play,” Pepys tells us; “but Lacey’s part is beyond imagination.” Of the same date is the portrait of Cave Underhill as Obadiah, in this same play of the “*Committee*.” Underhill was a comrade of Anthony Leigh, “a more mercurial actor,” and another great favourite with Charles II. “Underhill,” says Dibdin, “was true to nature in his acting. . . . He performed those parts which, though they are considered secondary in plays, require very frequently more judgment than those which are called principal.”

His portrait is in the coffee-room as Dominic in “*The Spanish Friar*”; a most effective rendering of a

part, said to combine demure wickedness with the overbearing demeanour of a proud priest. Another contemporary, whose portrait is preserved, is that of Nat Lee, the mad actor-poet, who played Duncan in “*Macbeth*” in 1672, and afterwards wrote his tragedy of “*Alexander the Great*” in Bedlam. Lee was found dead in the snow, in the streets of London, when still quite a young man.

But the greatest “stars” of the epoch were undoubtedly Betterton and Mrs. Barry ; of the latter there is a picture, unsigned, in the strangers’ dining-room, representing the former as Hamlet, the latter as Queen. The painting is dark and discoloured, while the composition leaves much to be desired. Hamlet, the principal figure, is close to the frame ; a large portion of the canvas is occupied by the mailed figure of the Ghost, and the attitudes of the actors are stagey in their exaggerated exhibition of terror. But the picture is valuable as a pictorial record of worthies whose figures are forgotten, although their names survive. All Betterton’s contemporaries speak of him in terms of unmeasured praise. Addison says that, “ Such an actor as Mr. Betterton ought to be recorded with the same respect as Roscius among the Romans.” Hamlet seems to have been his strongest part.

His wife had been Mrs. Sanderson, who was the first female actress on the English stage. Till her time men acted the women parts, chief among them

Edward Kynaston, whose gifts were a “grace and ease that nothing ever surpassed” (Dibdin). During the Commonwealth the puritanic spirit objected to theatre-going, and especially to the appearances of men in petticoats. At the restoration the new system of female performers was denounced as indecorous ; but it speedily grew popular, and presently the whole caste contained women only : ¹ Mrs. Betterton earned a great reputation in Shakespeare and was the best Lady Macbeth of her time, outrivalling even her successor, Mrs. Barry. Pepys greatly admired her and highly praises her sweet voice and incomparable acting. Mrs. Betterton enjoyed an unblemished reputation, and was the virtuous and faithful helpmate of her husband for five-and-forty years.

There is little, however, in the picture I am describing to justify these accounts of him. His companion in it, Mrs. Barry, was little less celebrated than himself, and was generally reputed the finest actress of her day. At first unsuccessful, she presently gained the highest praise ; “a reputation beyond any woman I have ever seen in a theatre,” says Dryden, in his preface to “Cleomenes,” a tragedy in which she played the heroine. Yet “with all her enchantment,” it was Anthony Alston’s opinion that “this fine

¹ The innovation was hastened by Charles II., who would not tolerate this travesty of the female characters, and forbade it when “Hamlet” was performed, and the play delayed because the Queen was not yet shaved.

creature was not handsome, her mouth opening most on the right side . . . She was middle-sized, had darkish hair, light eyes, and was indifferent plump." The round full cheeks of this florid beauty are distinctly recorded in the Garrick picture of Mrs. Barry.

A word or two more about this famous actress, the daughter of a barrister, Edward Barry, who was given a colonelcy for raising a regiment for Charles I. She was his orphan daughter, and educated by Lady Davenant, a relation of the poet of that name, through whose influence the girl made her *début* on the stage in 1700. She was mistress of the notorious Earl of Rochester, to whose tuition it was said she owed much of the grace of her acting. Cibber says of her : "She had a presence of elevated dignity ; her mien and motion were superb and gracefully majestic ; her voice full, clear and strong, so that no violence of passion could be too much for her, and when distress or tenderness possessed her she subsided into the most affecting melody and softness. In the art of exciting pity she had a power beyond all actresses I have yet seen."

Of the same period, and perhaps more widely and more popularly known, was "the impudent comedian, the Merry Monarch's chief favourite, the indiscreetest, wildest creature that ever was in a court," but "a mighty pretty soul"—Nell Gwynne. There are two portraits of her in the club, one unsigned and scarcely valuable, the other a fair example of

Sir Peter Lely, who painted her again and again. This canvas, which hangs in the drawing-room, is no doubt inferior to the fine portraits possessed by Sir Brook Boothby, or by Earl Spencer at Althorp ; but it brings before us with pleasing truthfulness the well-known characteristics of this frail but engaging creature. She freely displays her exuberant charms, and we can admire her pink and white complexion, her ripe embonpoint, the round beautiful face, the reddish auburn hair, the turned-up nose, and the laughing lively eyes, so small as to be almost invisible at times. An especial beauty in the ancestress of the Beauclercs was a diminutive foot, " the smallest foot in England," which, strange to say, is not reproduced in any of her portraits. The Army and Navy Club to-day stands on the site of Nell Gwynne's residence in Pall Mall, and on acquiring the premises secured some remnants of her belongings. An ancient mirror, now in the lower smoking-room, was her property, and could not have done much justice to her beauty ; and with the mirror a silver fruit-knife of hers is still preserved.

A more estimable character, who followed close in Nell Gwynne's footsteps, was Mrs. Bracegirdle, whose portrait, by an unknown hand, hangs on the grand staircase of the Garrick. We can see in this canvas, which represents her in dark blue velvet, trimmed with fur, just removing a mask, the beauties that Ashton has recorded—the

“dark brown hair and eyebrows, black sparkling eyes, and a fresh blushing complexion.” We can understand as we gaze on these pure pearly flesh tints, the tendency she exhibited to flush in her “breast, neck, and face,” whenever she exerted herself. “Never,” says Cibber, “was any woman in such general favour with the spectators.” All who looked upon her loved her. It was said of her that, in the crowded theatre, she had as many lovers as she had male spectators. “Yet no lover, however rich, however high in rank, had prevailed upon her to be his mistress” (Macaulay). She was the first of her profession (if we except Mrs. Betterton) who was esteemed for her propriety of conduct; but the severity of her morals was rather due to an icy temperament, and Macaulay puts her down as “a cold, vain, interested coquette,” whose strict virtue cost her nothing and heightened the influence of her charms. She inspired the best authors to write for her, Rowe and Congreve among the number. All the gay sparks of the period sighed for her, yet her private character was unimpeachable. The story of Captain Hill’s attempted abduction of her is too well known to need repetition. He plotted to carry her off by force in a coach and six, and aided by hired mercenaries, laid forcible hands upon her as she was leaving Drury Lane Theatre. But the people rose and rescued her, much to Captain Hill’s disgust.

Mrs. Bracegirdle retired early from the stage. A younger and not less fascinating actress was rising into favour, and threatening to throw the elder actress into the shade. This was Ann Oldfield, "a lady whose ravishing perfections," says Fielding, "are the admiration of every eye and ear." Cibber describes her as "tallish in stature, beautiful in action and aspect, with a countenance benevolent, like her heart." We see something of these traits in the portraits of her at the Garrick ; the broad round face, with the large speaking eyes, which she half shut with so much archness in comedy. Mrs. Oldfield was the daughter of a Captain Oldfield, and lived with an aunt, who kept the Mitre Tavern in St. James' Market. Here she attracted attention for her perfect recitation of one of Beaumont and Fletcher's Comedies, and Rich, the manager, gave her an engagement at Drury Lane; and from fifteen shillings a week soon rose to large salaries and leading parts. She had a sweet silvery voice, a beautiful person, great sprightliness and grace, and soon became the first lady of the stage. She went to the theatre in a chair escorted by two footmen ; she seldom mixed with her fellow-professionals, and was allowed a special sum to buy her own clothes.

She was much esteemed in general society, although her private life was by no means irreproachable. She had one son by Arthur Maynwaring, and afterwards she was under the protection of General

Churchill, a nephew of the great Duke of Marlborough, and son of his elder brother. The story goes that Queen Caroline remarked to her one day : "I hear that you and the General are married." "Madam," replied the actress discreetly, "the General keeps his own secrets." Mrs. Oldfield's descendants married well, and she found burial in Westminster Abbey, with peers supporting her pall at her funeral.

Doggett, an excellent comic actor of those early days, deserves a passing word. His portrait in the club may be examined by those who only know his name in connection with the coat and badge still rowed for by Thames watermen, under the terms of his will. A testy, obstinate creature, with a passion for money-grubbing, devoted to usury and stock-jobbing, but nevertheless a truly great comedian. His character may be estimated by the story of the housemaid, who went into his rooms one afternoon and cut her throat with one of his razors. "I hope it was not with my best razor," remarked Doggett.

One of the greatest names, however, more, perhaps, from the prominent part he played in the world than from his dramatic powers, was that of Colley Cibber, who from small beginnings rose to be poet-laureate, to be widely esteemed in the West End, to live in Berkeley Square, to be a member of White's, and to be buried in Westminster Abbey as a great man. He was unquestionably the worst poet-laureate ever

made. But he was a successful dramatist, and he dared even to "adapt" Shakespeare to the stage ; what is more, his adaptations survive. As an actor, he was essentially comic, but he preferred to play tragedy, although his Richard III. and all his passionate performances made people laugh. Fortunately we see him at the Garrick portrayed in the character that was universally acknowledged to have suited him best ; it is that of Lord Foppington in the third act of "The Relapse," when he is saying : "I wouldn't be in eclipse another day, though I had as many wounds in my body as I have in my heart." The picture is by Grisoni, an Italian painter, who particularly excelled in portraiture, and it is easy to understand from the canvas how Colley Cibber's Lord Foppington, bedecked in an embroidered suit loaded with ornaments, bearing his muff, his snuff-box, and his clouded cane, continued for years a model of fashionable dress. Cibber was the connecting link between several generations. He had seen and reverenced Betterton ; he played with Quin ; and he survived to pass an opinion upon Garrick's early efforts for fame.

Quin, the last of the Betterton school, was long the despot of the stage. A gentleman by birth, a lawyer by profession, his sympathies, his aspirations, were all dramatic, and he was successful almost from the moment he appeared. It was in Falstaff, for which he was especially suited, with his tall and

bulky person, his strong yet pleasing voice, his piercing and expressive eyes, that he first conquered the town. In tragedy he imitated Booth, whose Cato he was said to surpass ; but Quin had none of his model's passion, or gifts of grace and action. He was dull, heavy, monotonous, emphasising the worst faults of his great predecessor. Yet Quin was long without rivals ; he made his own terms with managers ; his word was law upon the stage ; in private life he was feared, tolerated, caressed. The best houses were open to him in London, Bath, or the counties, and he is no doubt best remembered from his eccentric ways, his epicurean tastes, and his hectoring, quarrelsome tongue. He was a noted duellist and twice killed his man ; while his repartees were often cruel, but generally humorous. The story is told of Quin at Bath, that when his servant called him of a morning he would inquire first of the weather, and then whether there were any “ John Dory ” in the market. If it were wet and none of his favourite fish on sale, he would turn over in bed and say : “ Call me the same time to-morrow morning.”

Quin was honourably proud of his profession, and every one will admire the sturdy independence of his reply to the nobleman who regretted that Quin was a player. “ What would your lordship have me ? —a lord ? ” was a fitting retort to the insolent speech. Quin's elocution must have been highly esteemed, for he was selected by Frederick Prince of Wales,

to instruct the royal children; and when George III. delivered his first speech from the throne, it was with pardonable exultation that Quin exclaimed : "I taught the boy to speak." Quin's foremost position, long the established tragedian on the English stage, was cruelly assailed by the successful rise of David Garrick. When the new actor took the town by storm, Quin was goaded into crying : "If this young man be right, we have been all wrong." He fought hard for his supremacy and when beaten he retired with dignity from the stage, to return later and become Garrick's warm friend. Falstaff was his great part, in which, according to Sir Horace Walpole, he was as excellent as Garrick in King Lear. Garrick appeared first as Richard III. at the Goodman's Fields Theatre, and such was his fame, that the long road between the theatre and Temple Bar was nightly blocked with carriages. Of the various portraits the Garrick possesses of Quin, the best is a small Hogarth in the strangers' coffee-room, representing him at sixty in the unsuitable part of Young Chamont, in "The Orphan." Quin, corpulent and overgrown, weighing some sixteen stone, appears in a crimson coat richly trimmed with lace, a long white periwig, and square-toed shoes, "more like Sir John Brute in the drunken scene," says a critic, "than the youthful and fiery Chamont." Yet it is a charming cabinet picture, beautiful in colour, and in excellent preservation.

Most of Quin's contemporaries are to be found amongst the Garrick portraits. A fine painting is that of Mrs. Clive by Verelst. Verelst must be one of the family of the well-known Verelst, the Dutch painter of Charles II.'s reign, probably his grandson, William Verelst, who was much esteemed as a portrait painter in London during the first half of the eighteenth century. I have heard this Garrick picture ascribed to Van Haecken, on the grounds that there is a well-known print of it so signed ; but I have seen this print, and observe distinct differences between it and the Verelst "Clive" at the Garrick. The Garrick portrait endorses the contemporary opinion that Mrs. Clive, the Kitty Clive of her day, was not beautiful. We see before us the "jovial, ugly, witty, sensible actress," who was the universal favourite of the day, particularly in *Nell*, in "The Devil to Pay," and similar characters. Her comic talents were deservedly styled exquisite. She was essentially natural, and created a school of realism, so that the best acting in her line has been modelled after her. Her walk in comedy was extensive—chambermaids, hoydens, romps, country girls, viragoes and superannuated dowds. "No one," says one who had often seen her, "could be grave when Clive was disposed to be gay." Although separated from her husband, a brother of Mr. Baron Clive, her fair fame was never spotted by the slightest suspicion of calumny. Frank, blunt, eccentric in

manner and disposition, she was respected to the last, and left the stage after a long and brilliant career, to survive for many years in a modest villa on the banks of the Thames. She was bitten by the prevailing vice of gambling, and did not always keep her temper at play. No better story is told than that of her at quadrille, when her opponent, a hoary-headed dowager, demanded payment for two black aces. "Two black aces!" cried Kitty Clive, "I'd like to give you two black eyes, you old white cat!"

Two other great actresses may be mentioned here, contemporaries of Quin and Kitty Clive, and in their débuts slightly antecedent to Garrick, although their fame was brightest when associated with him. These were Mrs. Pritchard and Mrs. Cibber, both of whom are well represented in the Garrick, as we shall see.

The first began at the booths of Bartholomew Fair, but she rose rapidly to a leading position upon the London stage. Her range was wide. She was equally strong in tragedy and comedy, and in this respect was superior to her great successor, Mrs. Siddons, who lacked her versatility. "Mrs. Pritchard," says Dibdin, "was everywhere great, everywhere impressive, everywhere feminine." Yet this marvellous actress was nothing off the stage; she was the reality of the type Thackeray drew in "The Fotheringay," and it is quite possible that he gained his own conception from her. Dr.

Johnson said : "Pritchard in common life was a vulgar idiot ; she would talk of her 'gownd.' . . . Sir, she had never read the tragedy of 'Macbeth' through ; she had no more thought of the play out of her own part than a shoemaker thinks of the skin out of which the peace of leather of which he is making a pair of shoes is cut." Mrs. Siddons hesitated to believe this statement, but she was afterwards assured by a gentleman, a friend of Mrs. Pritchard's, that he had supped with her one night after she had acted *Lady Macbeth*, and that she declared she had never perused the whole tragedy. "I cannot believe it," said Mrs. Siddons.

As an actress she had more general ability than Mrs. Cibber. The latter's acting was delightful, Mrs. Pritchard's commanding ; "one insinuated herself into the heart, the other took possession of it." Mrs. Cibber's strong point was her exquisite silver-toned voice. She almost sang her part ; it was a sweet high-pitched sort of recitative. There was naturally much of the conventionality of the old school in her favourite "demi-chant," which, as Cumberland records, was so extremely wanting in contrast that, although it did not wound the ear, it wearied it. But this peculiar gift, of one who belonged to a very musical family, gave her great power in all tender and pathetic parts. She long preserved, too, upon the stage the appearance of youth, and this in spite of domestic

troubles, and the blackguard treatment of her husband, that finished scoundrel, Theophilus Cibber, son of Colley Cibber, who sold her to a lover, and brought an action against her seducer with £5,000 damages, and was awarded £10. She was a most exquisite actress, and could embody all the passions—love, rage, resentment, pity, disdain—although not so happy in comedy. At fifty, Mrs. Cibber could still play the part of Celia, a girl of sixteen; her uncommon symmetry, her singular vivacity, kept her apparently young to the last. Ophelia was the part with which she was chiefly identified, but she achieved a great triumph as Constance in “King John.”

In association with these famous actresses we have the great English Roscius brought vividly before us in the club that bears his name. Among the finest pictures in the Garrick are those which, hanging over the opposite fireplaces of the coffee-room, represent Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard in “*Macbeth*,” and Garrick and Mrs. Cibber in “*Venice Preserved*.” They are both from the brush of the Italian, Zoffany, who came to London and starved at decorating clock faces, until he found work as a portrait painter. Garrick was a constant sitter to him, and was painted by him in many of his best characters, such as Abel Drugger and Sir John Brute, both of them admirable renderings of the great actor, and well known from the en-

gravings of those works ; again as Lord Chalkstone which is in the Garrick Club collection. The two pictures in the Garrick to which I would now refer, full of character and now of ripened colours, are in Zoffany's best manner. In "Macbeth" we have the dagger scene, where Lady Macbeth taunts her cowardly lord : "Infirm of purpose, give me the daggers !" words spoken, as we can well understand, with tremendous effect.

Garrick's terror-stricken attitude is most effective. We regret as we gaze on him the incongruity of his costume ; for Garrick, although a stage reformer, had not dared to depart from old traditions of dress, and he is playing the Highland thane in a long-skirted blue coat with crimson cuffs, and a full-bottomed wig of the Georgian period. At other times he acted Macbeth dressed in a suit of black silk, with silk stockings and shoes, buckles at the knees and feet, a full-bottomed wig, and a sword—very much the costume of a fashionable gentleman of the day.

When West, the painter, asked Garrick why he adhered to this ridiculous usage, he said he was afraid of his audience, who would have thrown a bottle at his head, if he had dared to change. It was reserved for John Philip Kemble, when stage-manager at Drury Lane, to correct the absurdities of stage costume, although Henderson appears to have preceded him in this respect. In Romney's

picture of Henderson as Macbeth, on the club staircase, the Scotchman makes up as an excellent mediæval warrior, wearing body armour, with arms and legs bare. Macklin in 1772 played Macbeth at Covent Garden in the dress of a highland chieftain, but is described as a clumsy old man, who looked more like a Scotch piper than a great general. It may be added here that Kemble himself first played Othello in the full uniform of a British general ; as Macbeth, he wore a hearse-like plume in his bonnet, and Mrs. Crough, the singer, who played the First Witch, was in point lace and powdered hair.

But it is easy to realise that Garrick was independent of errors in dress. The attitude preserved by Zoffany in this picture, the two outstretched hands and the gesture of turning away, appears to have been a favourite one with Garrick. This peculiar action was produced within living memory by General Arabin, who had seen Garrick and was supposed to imitate him successfully. The picture from "Venice Preserved" is equally impressive. Here again we have Garrick as the Italian in a modern court dress, although Mrs. Cibber, as Belvidera, is in a costume which bears some resemblance to that of a Venetian dame. The scene is that in which Jaffier, with uplifted dagger, is about to stab her. Belvidera is on her knees, her beautiful face upturned in an ecstasy of terror. It is just possible

to trace in this picture the curious likeness supposed to exist between Garrick and Mrs. Cibber. From similarity of complexion, size, and countenance, they would easily have been supposed to be brother and sister. This is Davies' opinion, and the statement is borne out by Cumberland. These two pictures by Zoffany are the most important and noteworthy portraits of Garrick, but there are of course many others in the club. The great actor was being painted continually by all the great artists of the day : Hogarth, Loutherbourg, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Zoffany, as I have said.

Garrick must have been a trying sitter. An amusing story is told of the way he practised upon the patience and temper of Gainsborough. He paid sixteen visits to his studio, it is said, and on each occasion had imperceptibly wrought a change in his features ; at last the painter, declaring he could not paint a man with such a "Protean phiz," threw down his brush in despair. The extraordinary facial power of Garrick is still further shown in the fact that he sat to Hogarth as Fielding, after the novelist's death. Hogarth wished to paint a posthumous likeness of Fielding, but there was no work extant to which he could refer. Garrick, therefore, dressed in a suit of Fielding's clothes, and cleverly assumed his features, look, and attitude. It was not strange that Johnson, when he heard that Garrick's face was growing wrinkled, should exclaim, "And so

it ought, for whose face has experienced so much wear and tear as his?" There is a small portrait of him as Richard III., by George Morland, after Dance, a copy of the well-known original in the possession of Sir Watkin Wynne. If this be really a Morland, it is valuable even as a copy; but we must not forget that this painter, amazingly prolific as he was, allowed others to use his signature to their works. The attitude is stagey and forced, and although the part was one in which he gained unmeasured applause, we may believe, with many, that it was not his best. Hogarth, however, declared, that he here excelled, that he was most at home when begrimed with blood, or in coarse characters like Abel Drugger. We see him again in the club in a well-painted but greatly reduced copy of Sir Joshua Reynolds' well-known picture of "The Actor between Tragedy and Comedy."

CHAPTER XVI

ART TREASURES IN CLUBS—continued

GARRICK was surrounded and supported by a galaxy of celebrities, male and female. “The ladies of his theatre were the plagues of his life”; the women worried the good-natured manager to death. I have dealt with two of them, Mrs. Pritchard and Mrs. Cibber; others were the celebrated Margaret or “Peg” Woffington, George Ann Bellamy, Mrs. Abington, and Mrs. Pope. Much has been written about Mrs. Woffington. We see her in the Garrick, the versatile, bewitching and whimsical Irishwoman, well portrayed in several canvases. There is a Hogarth in the drawing-room, which represents her on a couch, “dallying and dangerous,” as Charles Lamb wrote of this picture; a lovely recumbent figure in a reddish-brown dress, with tiny white-slipped feet outstretched. The colour of the picture is somewhat dark and perished, but the face is rendered with that special aptitude for beauty which is a not sufficiently well-recognised attribute of the great caricaturist. Close by is another Woffington, painted by a less famous hand,

that of Mercier, possibly less truthful, but certainly more beautiful.

Philip Mercier was a Frenchman, born at Berlin, and brought over to England by Frederick Prince of Wales, who made him a member of his household, and after nine years of it, he set up on his own account as a portrait-painter in Covent Garden. His work is exceedingly fresh, and in looking at this charming portrait of Woffington, with its lovely face, its dark expressive eyes, and engaging aspect, we can understand the empire she exercised over men's hearts. It has been said that she was the handsomest woman that ever appeared on the stage ; unfortunately she had a bad voice, "the only impediment to her becoming superlatively excellent." She was an actress-of-all-work, playing all parts, from Sir Harry Wildair to Lady Macbeth. "She was famous for performing in male attire," says Leigh Hunt, "and her Sir Harry Wildair, the character in which she first appeared in London, was so excellent, she represented the gay, dissipated, good-humoured rake, with so much ease, elegance, and propriety of deportment, that no male actors could compete with her." A true artist, she could on occasion sacrifice personal feelings to the general interests of the theatre, and "she ever remained," says a contemporary, "the same gay, affable, obliging, good-natured Peggy to all around her," except to one

person, her rival and pet aversion, George Ann Bellamy.

Peg Woffington was a charming character. "She was adorned with every virtue; honour, truth, benevolence, and charity, were her distinguishing qualities." She supported her mother comfortably and was herself foremost in good works, having built and endowed a number of almshouses at Teddington. Hers was a deeply interesting face, but with a little hint of foolishness and an air of lightness in all its calm, pale placidity. One of Garrick's biographers, Davies, says that she was the handsomest woman who had appeared on the stage, and that Garrick was in doubt at one time whether he should not marry her.¹ She was a fine actress, unrivalled in many parts, and especially, as has been said, in that of a young man.

The good-natured, kindly disposed Peg Woffington had one pet aversion, her rival George Ann Bellamy, whom she hated bitterly, and once assaulted fiercely at the wing. It was in the "Rival Queens" when Mrs. Bellamy outshone her in costume. Peg was dressed, we are told, in a cast-off robe of the Princess Dowager of Wales, while Bellamy had sent to Paris for two magnificent costumes. Peg, in the great scene as Roxana, maddened by jealousy, rolled her rival in the dust, and, pummelling her

¹ Garrick married Fraulein Violetta, a Viennese professional dancer, who long survived her husband and lived to be 99.

with the handle of her dagger, gave peculiar effect to the words, “Die, sorceress, die!” which were in her part. There is a portrait of Miss Bellamy in the coffee-room of the club, by Lindo—a dark-haired and seemingly dark-eyed beauty, quite charming enough to explain the adulation and attention she received while she was in full possession of her charms. Her Juliet was perfection; of her Belvidera a fine judge said: “I came to admire Garrick, but I go away enchanted with Bellamy.” Her surpassing beauty, her soft blue eyes, her exquisite fairness (not borne out by the portrait) rendered her a very goddess of love. Yet her career ended in debt, darkness, and misery.

Mrs. Abington began as a flower-girl, or worse, but she became an educated and accomplished woman, and was an especial favourite of the Dublin stage when Garrick persuaded her to succeed Mrs. Pritchard and Mrs. Clive at Drury Lane. He seems on a closer acquaintance to have learnt to hate her, often speaking of her as that “most worthless creature, that worst of bad women; she is as silly as she is false and treacherous. Yet she had undoubted talent, wide and various; she thinks nothing low that is nature, nothing mean or beneath her skill which is characteristic.” She is chiefly remembered as the original Lady Teazle, and the Garrick Club is fortunate in possessing a capital

picture by Roberts of the great screen scene in "The School for Scandal." Mrs. Abington is the central figure, and with her are King, as the original Sir Peter Teazle, and Smith and Palmer as Charles and Joseph Surface. Mrs. Abington's cleverness was not confined to the stage; she appears to have been gifted with exquisite taste in dress. Her style was copied, her advice was sought by great ladies, and at one time the "Abington" cap was in all the milliners' shops. There is another portrait of her by Hickey, as Lady Bab Lardoон in "The Maid of Oaks," in the drawing-room.

Miss Younge, who afterwards became Mrs. Pope, was an esteemed actress of Garrick's later time. She was practically a pupil of his; he "took uncommon pains with her." "I shall consider her," says Boaden, "as a daughter of Garrick's theatre, for there she acquired all the resources of her art, and they constituted her the most general actress the world has ever seen. But she was more especially Mrs. Clive's successor in broad comedy, although Cordelia to Garrick's Lear was a great part of hers." An interesting point in connection with Mrs. Pope was the strong resemblance she was supposed to bear to the beautiful Lady Sarah Lennox, George III.'s early love. The King, in the autumn of life, and the decay of his mental powers, saw Mrs. Pope at

Drury Lane, and was heard to mutter, "She's like Lady Sarah still."

One or two more actresses of this period must be mentioned here—Mrs. Yates, of whom there is a fine portrait by Coates in the coffee-room, an actress of fine presence, very beautiful and dignified ; and Mrs. Barry, wife of Spranger Barry, the silver-tongued Irishman, who competed not unsuccessfully with Garrick. Mrs. Barry was admirable in comedy ; her Rosalind and Beatrice were both perfect representations, but she was great as Cordelia, and overwhelmingly pathetic as Belvidera. She used to say she played tragedy to please the town, comedy to please herself. By common consent the most lovely actress of that age was Mrs. Hartley, of whom Garrick said : "A finer creature I never saw." There is a good full-length portrait of her in the Club by Angelica Kauffman, in vestal white—long diaphanous robes, clinging close to her pliant and graceful form. She has the snowy flesh-tints so common with freckled complexions, and the reddish auburn hair that Giorgione loved to paint. People raved about her ; all censure, all criticism turned to panegyric on looking at her. We can almost understand how "Gentleman Smith," of Drury Lane, made a fool of himself about her, and was prepared to desert his wife, Lord Sandwich's sister, sooner than give up Rose Hartley. The episode of her pursuit by "Fighting" Fitzgerald has

already been described. She was the favourite subject of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and posed as the beautiful female in several of his most celebrated pictures. Another charming actress, whose life was more romantic and unfortunate, was Mrs. Robinson, the *Perdita* who conquered George IV. when the young Prince of Wales. The story is not a savoury one, and need not be repeated, but the beauty of her face and person may be realised in the various portraits we see of her. Mrs. Pitt, too, who invariably played the nurse in "*Romeo and Juliet*," must have been really attractive, if we are to believe Hogarth's beautiful cabinet portrait of her in the strangers' smoking-room of the club.

The stage world that Garrick ruled was peopled and crowded with eminent men. He had a host of good actors in his corps, some jealous rivals to be won over by his gentle considerateness, some too easily alienated, some loyal, faithful friends to the last. Macklin, the veteran who died at one hundred and seven, quarrelled with Garrick, as he did with everyone else, and was implacable to the last. The "*wild Irishman*," as he was called, savage, overbearing, violent in temper, was once tried for his life, and convicted of manslaughter at the Old Bailey. He is to be seen in the Garrick, painted by Opie, when he was ninety-three, and the canvas preserves his harsh features and generally unprepossessing face. Quin had some excuse for saying of him that the lines on

his face were like cordage, and again : “ If God writes a legible hand, that fellow is a villain.” Woodward was another of Garrick’s supporters, long a member of the Drury Lane Company, but returning in later years to Covent Garden, from whence he came. He began as an apprentice to Rich, the first harlequin, playing under the name of Lun, and was “ a very artful contriver of that kind of stage performance called pantomime.” Speaking of Rich, I may mention that there is a small Hogarth in this collection, of him and his family. An eccentric man, imperfectly educated, whom Foote accused of being unable to write his own name, Rich was nevertheless a very successful manager, who drew as great crowds to his theatre as Garrick, with all his genius, could collect at Drury Lane. Excellent, almost unrivalled as harlequin, especially in his attitudes, Woodward was yet far more ; he was esteemed the best Petruchio of his day, and no one will wonder at this reputation who sees the Garrick portrait of him in this character by Vandergucht. There is nothing better in the collection. It is Petruchio himself, with his bold, swaggering, self-reliant air, and any modern actor who wishes to make up the part has here a most perfect model to his hand. Woodward was also strong in Bobadil and Parolles. He was infinitely droll in Sir Andrew Aguecheek ; but he could play everything comic—scamps, fops, simpletons, fools. Dr. Doran thought him the

exact prototype of the elder Mathews. "He had brisk and genuine, if rather brassy, humour," says Leslie; "but in spite of his sense, and with the best intentions, he never could utter a line of tragedy."

King was another of the company, handsome, courtly Tom King, long stage manager at Drury Lane, "whose acting," says Charles Lamb, "left a taste on the palate, sharp and sweet, like a quince." King, as I have said, created the part of Sir Peter Teazle. There was an epigrammatic style in everything he tried, which gave peculiar point to Sheridan's spirited dialogue. It was the same as Lord Ogleby in "The Clandestine Marriage," the principal scene in which we have here admirably preserved in a picture by Zoffany. It hangs in the drawing-room in an excellent light, showing well the beautiful landscape background, and is a perfect specimen of the master's style. Lord Ogleby is placing his heart at the feet of Miss Sterling (Mrs. Baddeley), having been introduced and recommended by Canton, his French valet, played by Baddeley. Mrs. Baddeley was dissolute, even for that light age; she had already left her husband, and they were not on speaking terms, although performing on the same stage. The absurd similarity of their private relations to those dramatically depicted in this scene so highly amused George III. when he saw the play, that it was at his especial command

that Zoffany painted this picture. The story is told at length in Galt's "Lives of the Players." Mrs. Baddeley was very beautiful; her life in its early phases was romantic, if not strait-laced, but she died in abject degradation. Baddeley, originally a cook, was a good comic actor, but he is better remembered nowadays by his benevolent bequests than by his stage prowess. The Baddeley Twelfth Cake at Drury Lane is an institution he created and endowed, since greatly developed by the liberal hospitality of a later lessee of the theatre, Sir Augustus Harris. There are other portraits of King in the Garrick; one by Zoffany, as Touchstone, and another in day dress by Richard Wilson, the great English landscape-painter, who began his career with portraits. This is possibly a portion of some larger work. Kemble has been heard to say that he vaguely remembered having seen the figure of King on a larger canvas, and in this picture the frame exactly cuts a small dog in two. King was also the first Puff, in "The Critic"; and great as Mr. Oakley, in "The Jealous Wife." He was in every way a finished comedian.

Space forbids me to give more than a passing word to Yates, who was notoriously careless in learning his parts; to Jack Palmer, who is the Joseph Surface in the screen scene already mentioned, a pleasing, plausible actor, of whom there is a fine portrait in the coffee-room, by Arrowsmith; to

David Ross, painted by Zoffany, as Hamlet ; to Parsons, a born comedian, the original of Sir Fretful Plagiary in “*The Critic*,” of whom there is a capital portrait by Vandergucht, as Obadiah in “*The Committee*,” with Moody and Teague, both highly successful impersonations. There is a fine portrait, attributed to Sir Joshua Reynolds, of Foote, another of Garrick’s contemporaries, who soon ran alone at the Haymarket, where he was the parent of the modern “*Entertainment*.” We have here the very man, with his mouth set in the corner of his face, the coarse humorous features that he could twist into an exact imitation of every one, “from the court end of the town to Whitechapel.” Foote, it will be remembered, generally satirised the failings of the day ; vulgar gentility, the passion for bric-à-brac, medical quacks, nabobs, society at Bath. He has been called the British Aristophanes, but the simile is not happy. There was little original wit in Foote ; he was an imitator—spiteful, sardonic—who seized strongly marked foibles, and made their possessors look like rascals or fools. No public man, it was said, could enter Foote’s theatre without finding himself attacked. He spared no one where he could make a brutal jest. The loss of his leg, due to his excessive vanity in thinking he could ride, was a terrible blow to him ; and the pain he had inflicted on so many others recoiled on him, when he himself became the victim of a foul and

shameful charge. The imputation was completely disproved, but it eventually killed him.

Yet Garrick said Foote "was a man of wonderful abilities, and the most entertaining companion he had ever known." "He abounded in wit and humour and sense," said another critic, "but he was so fond of detraction and mimicry that he might properly be called a buffoon; and they were a great blemish in his reputation." Again, "Foote's talents are generally admitted, though we think not generally appreciated, for we¹ believe him to be, after Molière, and not *longo intervallo*, the greatest master of comic humour that ever lived, and he acted incomparably what he wrote inimitably."

It is worth rescuing from the dust of ages the well-known test of memory invented by Foote, the real author of which is generally forgotten. Charles Macklin, the actor, boasting of his wonderful memory, declared that he could recite anything on once hearing it. Foote handed him a slip of paper on which were certain sentences, and called upon him to read them once and repeat them. They ran as follows :

"So she went into the garden to cut a cabbage to make an apple pie, and at the same time a great she-bear came into the shop and shouted : 'What, no soap?' So he died, and she very imprudently married the barber, and there were present the Piccaninnies, the Jobylillies, the Garylillies and the

¹ A writer in the *Quarterly Review*.

great Panjandrum himself, with the little round button on top, and they all fell to playing catch-a-ho catch-candle till the gunpowder ran out of the heels of their boots." Macklin was beaten.

As Garrick's star was waning, a new and not less brilliant light appeared above the horizon. One of his last managerial acts was to introduce Mrs. Siddons to the London stage, as a set-off, she herself declares, against the jealous pretensions of the other ladies of his company. In any case, the majestic Sarah's first appearance was a failure. She is described as a pretty, delicate, fragile-looking creature, most unbecomingly dressed, speaking in a broken, tremulous voice, that lapsed into a horrid, almost inaudible whisper. It was not till her return, seven years later, that her marvellous talents were acknowledged. She secured a tremendous success as Isabella in the "Fatal Marriage," and sprang at once into fame. "Like a resistless torrent she carried everything before her"; her merit seems to have swallowed up all remembrance of past performances. "Her lofty beauty," says her biographer, Thomas Campbell, "her graceful walk and gesture, and her potent elocution, were endowments which at the first sight marked her supremacy on the stage." "There never perhaps was a better stage figure than Mrs. Siddons," says another biographer, Boaden. Above the middle height, but exactly symmetrical in figure, with finely formed

features, extraordinary flexibility, a voice naturally plaintive, that grew sonorous and plaintive at will, she had absolute dominion over her audience. She sent women into hysterics, convulsed men with tears, even frightened her companions on the stage.

We see her in the Garrick collection twice, painted by Harlowe, as Lady Macbeth. One picture represents her at the dread moment when she first conceives her crime : “Come all ye spirits that tend on mortal thought, unsex me here.” The other is the sleep-walking scene, in which she held her audience spell-bound, when, with awful remorseful voice, she cries : “Out, damned spot !” In both portraits full justice is done to the splendid countenance and imposing attitude of the great tragedian. Lady Macbeth was her favourite part. How she realised it, may be gathered from her own account of her first study of it, when late at night she was seized with a paroxysm of terror in the assassination scene, and hurried to bed without even daring to take off her clothes. Only second to his great sister was John Philip Kemble, who owed his introduction to London to her. Croker says : “He had no competitor in any walk of tragedy. Mrs. Siddons, it is agreed, was never excelled, and he by Garrick alone, and by Garrick only in his universality.” Kemble was an unrivalled Romeo, his Cato was magnificent, and in Coriolanus he reached the summit of high tragic dignity. This

great actor is well represented at the Garrick as Cato, a small replica of Lawrence's large portrait painted for Lord Blessington.

The copy was made by Lawrence himself for Mathews, under peculiar circumstances. The story is told at length in Mrs. Mathews's life of her husband : how Mathews had been promised a copy by Lord Blessington, and how, after many delays and much disappointment, Lawrence at last confided to Mathews that he had made the copy himself. The painter invited Mathews to his studio, and showed him his last work, a copy of the "Cato" at last completed, "all but a few touches." I fancy the picture did not come into Mr. Mathews's possession then and there, as I have heard he had to ask the painter's executors for it, who, however, admitted the claim and surrendered it. I believe the picture was even then incomplete, and was finished by Harlowe, one of Lawrence's most successful pupils. It represents Kemble in the correct dress of a Roman Senator, short white tunic and sandals. There are several other portraits of Kemble in the club—one as Hamlet, on his first appearance ; as Cato, by Westall ; as Penruddock, in "The Wheel of Fortune" by Dewilde ; also an unsigned Coriolanus, and a charming sketch by Harlowe from recollections of him in that part. Perhaps the best idea of John Philip Kemble's manly beauty may be gained from

the charming pencil-sketch of him by Sir Thomas Lawrence, which hangs in the library, a pendant to one of Mrs. Siddons, by the same master's hand. A noted actress, Catalini, who was closely identified with John Kemble during his management of Covent Garden, may be mentioned here. It was her engagement that led to the well-remembered O. P. riots, when prices were put up as "the gods" erroneously thought, to pay the Italian singer an enormous salary. A good portrait of Madame Catalini, presented by her son, hangs upon the staircase, by Lonsdale, a portrait-painter whose manner was bold and masculine, and who must have had some keenness in discriminating character. Good examples are to be seen of him in the Garrick, especially his portraits of Charles Mathews and Frederick Yates.

Other members of the Kemble family, all of whom took to the stage, but achieved lesser renown, are to be found in this collection. There is a full length of Charles Kemble on the staircase, as Macbeth, a portrait of him as Hamlet, by Wyatt, and another as Charles II., by Briggs. Charles Kemble came next after his great brother, but at some distance. Macready called him "a first-rate actor of second-rate parts." He was a fair Romeo, a passable Hamlet, good as Petruchio, Mercutio, Laertes, Cassio, and so forth. Leslie thought his Faulconbridge as perfect as the Coriolanus of his

brother John. Lady Morgan writes : "Charles Kemble was the best of the whole stock—beautiful, graceful, gallant, and a very fine gentleman." His wife (Miss de Camp) was an excellent actress—a dark-eyed, dark-haired beauty, eloquent in face and frame ; she had been a dancer, and her motion was music itself ere her voice was heard. Something of this may be seen in Dewilde's portrait of her as Patie in "The Gentle Shepherd." Stephen Kemble, another brother, long a strolling manager in the provinces, is here as Bajazet, by Dewilde. Stephen played Falstaff now and then with some success ; he was so overgrown that his figure suited the part without artificial stuffing. The later generation of Kembles scarcely maintained the traditions of the family. Fanny made a hit, but gained no permanent reputation. The heredity of genius is, however, proved by the dramatic talent of Mr. Henry Kemble, an excellent all-round actor on the stage to-day.

The Kemble epoch was distinguished by many other notable names. Through it George Frederick Cooke flourished, John Philip Kemble's great rival and competitor. Like Quin and Garrick, they played great parts alternately, but not for long, and they hated each other cordially. Cooke was cursed with the vice of intemperance, and when drunk, as was too frequently the case, he would rail violently against "Black Jack," Kemble's stage nickname.

Cooke was great as Richard III., "the best since Garrick," says a contemporary. He was formed for the sarcastic, was an admirable Sir Giles Overreach, in which many thought him far superior to Kemble. There are many portraits of him in this collection ; as Shylock, by Philips, R.A. ; as Kitely, by Singleton, R.A. ; as Sir Archy McSarcasm and Richard III., both by Dewilde. Charles Young was another, whose Hamlet some said had never been equalled, and who was, certainly, the next best actor to Kemble in tragedy. He is represented in the Garrick as Macbeth, in a somewhat slight portrait-sketch by Sir Edwin Landseer. The "boy Betty" scarcely deserves to be mentioned with these great names, but for a time he was the rage and fashion, often drawing crowded houses in London while Kemble played to empty benches. Master Betty was barely twelve when he made his *début* on the Belfast stage, and rather more than a year later he appeared as Barbarossa at Drury Lane, when the "divine boy" gained the most tremendous applause. He played everything, Rolla, Romeo, Hamlet, Young Norval ; and it is in this last character that we have him at the Garrick, in a full-length portrait by Opie, hanging on the top of the staircase. Home, the author of "Douglas," declared that Master Betty was the first actor who played the part according to his idea of the character when he conceived and wrote it. It is a pleasing and very striking portrait ; the youthful

figure with hand uplifted and flowing garments might be that of a boyish saint, some young John the Baptist in the wilderness.

The age was especially rich in comedians of every shade. Such names as those of Munden, Elliston, the two Bannisters, Quick, Snell, Emery, Lewis, Charles Mathews senior, may be mentioned in proof of this. Miss Farren, who became Countess of Derby, and whose fascinating face may be found in the drawing-room, made her reputation in "genteel" comedy. She was especially good as Lady Teazle and Miss Hardcastle, and generally followed Mrs. Abington in the successful personation of ladies of quality. Dora Jordan again, so long intimately connected with the Duke of Clarence, afterwards William IV., gained her chief reputation in comedy. "A charming, cordial actress," who pleased, nay bewitched, the public with the irresistible joyousness of her look, her laugh, her voice. She was a perfect Rosalind, but she also played Ophelia exquisitely. Sir Joshua Reynolds thought her greater than Mrs. Abington, wherever she challenged comparison. Personally she was widely popular, an engaging, fascinating lady, always in good humour, even when spiteful enemies in derision called her "Duchess," or threatened to give her "royal highness" a howl or a hiss. Dewilde has painted her in "The Country Girl," the part in which she made her London *début*. The picture is in the drawing-room, a pleasing figure;

and there is another of Dewilde's pictures of her as Phœdra, in *Amphitryon*. None of these are as good as that possessed by the Duke of Clarence himself (William IV.), who plainly told Mathews, when showing it to him, that he hoped it was better than any in the actor's collection. There can be no doubt that the separation between his Royal Highness and Mrs. Jordan was a terrible wrench, forced upon the Duke in spite of himself, and always regretted. He proved this when he became King by the honours he bestowed on Mrs. Jordan's children.

Charles Bannister reaches back really to Garrick's time. He was strolling in the eastern counties "doing all Mr. Garrick's business at fifteen shillings a week" in 1758, after which he came to town and joined Foote. He was strong in musical imitations, and had a charming voice, which was only good at night. "Neither I nor my voice can get up in the morning," he had said to Foote when being engaged. He was full of jokes at all times, a happy-go-lucky, reckless *bon vivant*, very popular in society, "keeping much fine company," but perpetually in debt, often in jail. He would spend his last guinea on a bundle of asparagus, or a couple of bottles of claret. This easy-going, out-at-elbows, but light-hearted gentleman, quite of the Micawber type, is admirably depicted in Zoffany's portrait of Charles Bannister in the strangers' dining-room.

Jack Bannister, his son, was always devoted

to his father, preferring his company to any one's. As a boy he would bring his father's salary straight from Garrick, by whom it was liberally paid, even when the actor was in a sponging house. Jack, who began as a Royal Academy student, soon abandoned art for the stage. He was a *protégé* of Garrick's, who advised but scarcely encouraged him, telling him he might humbug the town as a tragedian ; "but comedy is a serious thing, so don't try it yet." But Jack Bannister, to use his own expression, "soon laughed his tragedy out of fashion," and will always be remembered as a master of humorous acting, "a gloriously pleasant fellow," one who carried off the palm among performers of farce. We see him in the Garrick as Scout to Parson's Sheepface in "The Village Lawyer," in the title rôle of Sylvester Doggerwood, and as Lenitive in "The Prize," one of Charles Mathews's great parts.

We have portraits of Quick painted by Dupont, Dighton, and Dewilde. He was favourite comedian of George III., who began as a tragedian, then joined Foote, and was the original Tony Lumpkin, Acres, and Isaac Mendoza. It was said of Quick, a very vain man, that he believed in no living actor but himself. Lewis was "a matchless gentleman comedian," an ideal Mercutio, light and airy in his motions and voice ; it was always sunshine with him. The great feature of his acting was his personal activity

and amusing rapidity of speech. Whether sitting or standing, he was never for a moment at rest ; and this perpetual motion kept spectators in a roar. Lewis is one of the trio in *Speculation*, by Zoffany, acting Tanjore to Quick's Alderman Arable, and Munden's Project.

Munden was a great actor, a splendid low comedian, whom Garrick first inspired to go upon the stage. Talfourd declares him to have been the greatest comedian he ever saw, with the richest and most peculiar vein of humour, and the most extensive range of character. He seems to have possessed the most extraordinary facial power. At rest, the features were commonplace, but he could at will give them the strangest and most fantastic forms. Lamb said that "Munden alone literally makes faces ; there is one face of Farley, another face of Knight, one (but what a one it is !) of Liston, but Munden has none that you can properly pin down and call his." When playing with Jack Johnstone in "The Committee," his grimaces were so irresistibly comic that, not only did the audience shriek with laughter, but Johnstone himself was almost too much convulsed to proceed. Jack Johnstone, "Irish" Johnstone, well known as Denis Balgruddery, and the Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan of Sir Martin Shee's portrait, must not be confounded with Henry Johnstone, of whom there is a fine full length as Douglas, by Singleton, R.A., on

the staircase. We see Munden again, painted by Clint, in the wonderful scene from "Lock and Key." Munden as old Brummagem, imprisoned by the gout in an arm-chair, while Knight shows the key, and Fanny and Laura (Mrs. Alger and Miss Cubitt) looked on disgusted from behind. Suett again, Dickie Suett, whose laugh like a peal of giggles, "Ha ! ha ! oh ! la !" is still remembered as infinitely diverting. He told stories incomparably ; the good things he said were on every tongue.

Emery, the great personator of Yorkshire characters, is to be seen here as Tyke, by Dewilde, in "The School for Reform." He was an inimitable stage rustic, perfect in his representation of loutish cunning, a master of the Yorkshire dialect, excellently fitted with a stout frame and broad face for the parts he played. Elliston, the best Falstaff of his time, was also strong in Ranger and Young Absolute. He was a great favourite of George III., and had the Weymouth theatre for years. He was mad for management, having sometimes a dozen theatres on his hands. He thought himself a great orator too, and was always making speeches. But fortune was not kind to him ; his own dissipated tastes and his recklessness ruined him. Liston came somewhat later and survived longer. He was a first-rate quiet "comedian," excelled in calm comedy, set spectators roaring without moving a muscle, and in time, established such sympathy with his audience

that he could take almost any liberties with them. There are several excellent pictures of Liston in the Garrick ; one as Lubin Log in “ Love, Law, and Physic,” which admirably renders his stolid, stupid surprise when Flexible, the lawyer, insists that black is white. “ Shall a timber merchant dare contest with me in points of law ? ” says Flexible—a part that was amongst the most successful of the rich répertoire of the actor represented in this picture, Charles Mathews himself.

It is but natural that in a collection formed by Mr. Mathews, he should figure frequently. There are many excellent portraits of him at the Garrick, perhaps the most remarkable is Harlowe’s canvas, which depicts him in four perfectly different and distinct characters. The picture hangs in the drawing-room, near the door, just below the portrait of old Macklin, to whom, now nearing his dotage, Mathews, when first stage-struck, applied for advice. Harlowe’s picture is in itself a convincing proof of Mathews’s extraordinary versatile powers. The four characters are those of Fond Barneyl, the idiot newsvendor of York ; another weak-minded simpleton catching a fly ; Mr. Wiggins, an extraordinary stout man, in a farce called “ Mrs. Wiggins ” ; and Mathews himself in ordinary day dress. There is another admirable portrait by Clint, A.R.A., of Liston and Mathews together in “ The Village Lawyer,” the former as Sheepface, the latter as Scout

—a performance of which Mrs. Mathews records that, when first so played, it took Mr. Mathews quite by surprise. Till then Liston had impressed them with a sense of his inveterate gravity, both on and off the stage ; but as Sheepface he amazed Mathews, and made him laugh so hugely, that he was hardly able to go on with his part intelligibly. Charles Mathews was also painted repeatedly by Dewilde, as Sommo, Sir Fretful Plagiary, Buskin, Caleb Quotem, always with the Dutch-like precision and completeness that was Dewilde's greatest charm. There is an excellent portrait of him by Lonsdale, and an amusing character study of him as the old Scotch Lady, by Chalon, R.A. We see in these pictures the long, unnaturally thin form, the mouth that was little better than "a hole in the cheek," the marvellous mastery over "make-up," the power, almost unrivalled, that Mathews possessed of completely metamorphosing himself a hundred times over. The tricks he so long played on most intimate friends, by personating "Mr. Pennyman," quite without detection, is one of the most numerous episodes of his gay memoirs.

It has been impossible to do full justice to the merits of this remarkable collection. There are scores of excellent portraits by Dewilde, who devoted himself exclusively through a long life to theatrical portraiture ; but to catalogue these adequately would fill many pages.

This account, however, would be lamentably incomplete did I not include some reference to the later lights of the stage. Unfortunately for the collection it contains only one portrait of Kemble's great successor, Edmund Kean. This is a small portrait of the eminent tragedian in the incongruous attire of a Red Indian. Kean towards the end of his career, visited the States and Canada. While at Quebec his audience once included a number of Huron chiefs, who later expressed a wish to elect him as one of their tribe, and he was formally initiated as a chief under the name of Altenaida—an honour which it is said aroused the highest enthusiasm in him ; so much so, that he at one time contemplated retiring to the backwoods in search of perfect peace, instead of returning to Drury Lane. There are one or two portraits of Macready, but none good ; one of James Wallack, a follower of Kemble's, in day dress ; and a large portrait may be seen, an excellent likeness of Charles Kean as Louis XI., with bowed figure, hat in hand. There is a fine full-length portrait of Miss O'Neill, by Joseph, A.R.A., a grand figure in classical costume, draped in white against a storm-cloud, and wearing a brilliant crimson tunic—a canvas which preserves the perfect features of this handsome, engaging creature. Miss O'Neill followed Mrs. Siddons at no great distance, as the latter was waning, and achieved great success. She revived the splendid

traditions of Mrs. Siddons as Juliet, Belvidera, and Mrs. Haller. She retired from public life on her marriage with Sir —— Wrixon-Becher, and died at a very advanced age.

Although rich in many kinds of art, the chief wealth of this collection lies in theatrical portraiture, in the lifelike presentment of famous actors in famous parts. Those amongst us who appreciate the dramatic art may see upon the walls of the Garrick, if privileged to enter the club, the notabilities that were so closely associated with the early triumphs and greatest traditions of the British stage. It may be doubted whether coming generations will be equally fortunate, whether the present lights of the dramatic profession will be brought as vividly before our descendants as we have had handed down to us those of the past. In our times, whatever the cause, possibly the amazing development of photography, the lineaments and attitudes of our principal public favourites are not being generally preserved, through the only lasting mediums of oil and stone. For one theatrical portrait painted nowadays, there were hundreds and hundreds a century ago. The most famous artists used their brush largely for the purpose, while many, talented and widely esteemed, gladly devoted themselves almost exclusively to this branch of art. Our eminent living actors do not constantly sit, and when they do, it is mostly in daily ordinary

guise, rarely in their most ambitious or most successful parts. Thus the Garrick Club possesses an admirable portrait of the late Sir Henry Irving, in a frock coat, painted and presented by Sir John Millais. This truthful and felicitous portrayal of the eminent actor has been more than once on view with the rest of Millais' collected works. The club, too, possesses a commendable portrait of the veteran Phelps as Cardinal Wolsey, in scarlet robes, painted by the versatile hand of Mr. Forbes Robertson, a very pleasing and popular actor. There is also an ambitious work, Mr. Henry Neville as Count Almaviva, by Mr. W. John Walton; and the features of Sir Squire and Lady Bancroft are preserved in marble statuettes, the work of a clever sculptor, the late Prince Victor of Hohenlohe. But these are about all the theatrical portraits of contemporaries in the Garrick Club. Nor outside of it, in the world of art, has there been much activity of a kind that would promise to supply material for some future collector of the elder Mathews type.

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